

THE RECEPTION HISTORY OF JOHN MILTON IN  
RUSSIA AND THE FORMER SOVIET UNION  
(1745-2013)

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Abstract: This study divides the reception history of John Milton in Russia and the former Soviet Union into three periods: pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet. The rationale for this division is rooted in the clear ideological ethos that marks each period, shaping Milton's image into a desirable propagandistic mould. Milton's reputation in Russia has undergone a cyclical development, returning to the point where it essentially began, and paralleling the course of Russian religious, social, and intellectual history. The reception has largely depended on the perception of Milton's epic *Paradise Lost*, in particular on the interpretation of Milton's literary creation of Satan. As Milton's epic has been deemed successful over time, so has the reputation of its creator followed suit. The first notices of Milton in Russia date from the manuscript translation of *Paradise Lost* in 1745 by Baron A. S. Stroganov. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian society adhered to the tenets of the Russian Orthodox Church; hence appraisals of the poem predictably focus on Milton's notions of Christian doctrine, especially those parts of *Paradise Lost* which reflect orthodox positions. The gradual secularization of Russian society after the Enlightenment brings with it the formation of a new, secular setting for Milton's Christian epic, which advances further with the establishment of Marxist-Leninist ideology as a result of the October Revolution of 1917. The official atheism of the Soviet period propagates the Marxist exegesis of Milton's epic, shaping its author into a revolutionary free thinker, who rebels against the old political system and asserts his right to liberty. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the consequent decline of dialectical materialism and faith in Communism, there followed the revival of Christian religion, and with it the return to examination of Christian contexts in Milton's work.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Literary scholarship concerning the life and work of John Milton is vast and steadily increasing. An area of study which has not kept pace involves Milton's reputation in Russia and the former Soviet Union. To date there exists one account of this subject, completed by a Canadian professor from the History Department of McGill University whose specialty is modern Russian, Slavic history and seventeenth and eighteenth century science. In 1983, Professor Valentine Boss contributed to the *Milton Encyclopedia* "Milton's Influence in Russia," which aims to inform Miltonists and seventeenth-century scholars of the subject in general. Boss's survey focuses mainly on Milton's influence in imperial Russia and concentrates on Russian translators of Milton's works and on Russian poets, whose works show awareness of Milton either through imitation or passing notices. Boss's book *Milton and the Rise of Russian Satanism* (1991) represents a valuable guide on the subject of Milton's influence on the satanic tradition in Russian literature, by tracing the Russian and Soviet career of Milton's Satan as a literary inspiration.

However, as their titles suggest, both of Boss's research efforts address the question of Milton's poetic influence on Russian literature, which is not identical with the question of Milton's reception history in Russia: while Milton's poetic influence on

Russian authors can testify to their favorable reception of his works (through their imitation), it is only one indicator of Milton's Russian reputation. In contrast, the goal of this reception study is to shed light on Russian and Soviet literary criticism of John Milton, furthering Boss's aims to provide a detailed survey of Russian and Soviet critics' writing on John Milton during the last two and a half centuries—from N. M. Karamzin to M. Iu. Sokolova. However informative, Boss's article and book do not pretend to be comprehensive, and being published before the collapse of the Soviet Union, they do not cover the most recent developments in studies on Milton's reputation and on Satan's fate with the modern Russian critics in the last thirty years. Hence, the following survey aims to supplement Boss's earlier efforts and update them through the year 2013.

In fact, since no Russian scholarship exists on Milton's reception history, the present study hopes to fill this void by reporting on the subject from the perspective of a native speaker, particularly since very few Western Miltonists are fluent in Russian and thus are equipped to do research in the former Soviet Union and report on this subject. However, it would be a mistake to attribute the thirty-year silence of Western critics on this subject to a lack of interest. On the contrary, the rare combination of Boss's historical and Russian-language expertise on the topic, as well as the 1991 promising announcement of his two forthcoming books on Milton's connections with Russian culture (*Poet-Prophet: Milton's Russian Image from the Enlightenment to Pushkin* and *Russian Popular Culture and John Milton*) made it appear as if this particular niche had already been taken. However, the unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the ensuing political chaos made it almost impossible for a Westerner to travel there and

get access to the archives—an event that was most likely responsible for Boss's two forthcoming books on Milton in Russian culture never materializing in print.

This study divides the reception history of John Milton in Russia and the former Soviet Union into three periods: pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet. The rationale for this division is rooted in the clear ideological ethos that marks each period, shaping Milton's image into a desirable propagandistic mould.<sup>1</sup> Milton's reputation in Russia has undergone a cyclical development, returning to the point where it essentially began, and paralleling the course of Russian religious, social, and intellectual history. The reception has largely depended on the perception of Milton's epic *Paradise Lost*, in particular on the interpretation of Milton's literary creation of Satan. As Milton's epic has been deemed successful over time, so has the reputation of its creator followed suit.

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<sup>1</sup>All Russian-language sources have been translated and transliterated by the author.

decline of dialectical materialism and faith in Communism, there followed the revival of Christian religion, and with it the return to examination of Christian contexts in Milton's work.

Thus, the overall argument of this reception study resides in the Russian and Soviet ideological appropriation of Milton's life and works for religious and political ends. The ideological needs of each historical period served as a lens through which Milton's writings were interpreted by their readers. Milton's equal popularity with Decembrists and their sympathizers like A. N. Radishchev and A. S. Pushkin in imperial Russia, and Soviet Marxists like M. Gor'kii and A. V. Lunacharskii (Lenin's Commissar for the Enlightenment) in the proletariat state, can be explained through the Russian identification of Satan in *Paradise Lost* with his author—a political rebel himself. Milton's revolutionary spirit in the days of the English Revolution became associated with Satan's passionate challenging of established authority in the mind of the Russian intellectuals who personally underwent political unrest in their own country—the Decembrist revolt of 1825 and, almost a century later, the 1905 Russian Revolution and the October Revolution of 1917.

Each of the three chapters traces Russian literary critics' opinions on Milton in chronological order, but emphasizes the most influential views that form a recognizable pattern in Milton's reception history during that ideological period. Milton's poetic influence on Russian literature is discussed only in the service of a larger goal and is primarily constrained to the pre-Soviet chapter, with the exception of Soviet and post-Soviet critics' comparative articles on this topic (e.g. V. T. Oleinik, A. N. Gorbunov). Thus, Russian poets and writers are addressed in this study only if they mentioned Milton



or his works in their writing; otherwise, a more elaborate opinion expressed by the Russian literary critics is given preference. Likewise, Russian translators of Milton's oeuvre are covered only if they include a preface on Milton or if their fate (or the fate of their translation) illustrates ideological forces at work (e.g. A. A. Shteinberg). Similarly, Russian editions of Milton's works are examined when the editorial choices of particular Russian translations and illustrations reveal a historical pattern in the ideological reception of Milton in Russia.

In addition, more detail and attention appear in commentary on critics of the pre-Soviet and Soviet eras, not mentioned in Boss's survey, such as A. Shul'govskaia, I. Ivanov, M. Dubinskii, M. Kovalevskii, I. Kon, and M. Sokolianskii. Likewise, some of the critics who receive full treatment in Boss's works are not given comparable coverage in this study because of its aim to be more complementary than repetitive. In this light, Boss's expertise on eighteenth-century Russian history, as revealed in his articles and his book, plays a part in establishing the historical background that shapes and polishes Milton's image in imperial Russia. The present study mentions historical events in detail only when they directly influence Milton's reputation and the reception of his works in Russia and the former Soviet Union, by encouraging certain ideological interpretation.

Chapter 1 examines Milton's reputation as a political rebel and a radical revolutionary among the Russian Romantics of imperial Russia, a reputation further developed by Marxist critics of the Soviet regime, the subject of Chapter 2. Since manuscript tradition was strong in imperial Russia until the end of the nineteenth century, Baron Stroganov's 1745 manuscript Russian prose translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* circulated widely and was known even before it was eventually published in 1820.

Stroganov's account of Milton's life titled "Zhitiyo" that prefaced his prose translation was the first Russian biography of Milton and was based on Elija Fenton's *Life*. In fact, Stroganov published his Russian translation of Fenton's *Life* already in 1780, even before his translation of *Paradise Lost* finally appeared in print in 1820. In nineteenth-century Russia, it was speculated that the publication of Stroganov's manuscript translation was delayed for seventy-five years due to religious and political reasons (*Moskovskiiia vedomosti* 4 [1837]: 316).

The first Russian translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* were in prose because they were done from French prose translations rather than from Milton's English blank-verse originals, so they inherited the prose inadequacies of their French originals, since their Russian translators often did not know English. In fact, in his 1810 review, well-known Russian critic E. F. Timkovskii railed against this still prevailing practice among the Russian anonymous translators and the resulting inaccuracies even in the more recent 1795 and 1810 Russian prose editions of Milton's epics. Timkovskii even felt ashamed of such rushed Russian publications that lacked a translator's preface and explanatory notes or an account of Milton's life, which made them appear very sloppy and commercially driven, especially when compared with the impressive French editions of Milton's epics (125). Timkovskii was also upset about the deliberate anonymity of these Russian translators, which together with the lack of editorial apparatus, turned such Russian translations into a useless reference for scholars and thus eventually into a paper for cigars (126). Even though the 1810 edition published by Platon Beketov's Typography claimed to be a Russian translation of the first three Books of Milton's *Paradise Lost* from the English original in its title, Timkovskii

exposed this translation as being made from the French prose translation instead (128). Timkovskii was also dismayed by the Russian editor's choice to merge three Books of *Paradise Lost* with one Book of *Paradise Regained* into one volume, making it appear as if Book 4 of *Paradise Lost* was in fact a book from *Paradise Regained* in the 1810 Russian prose edition (131-32). Timkovskii concluded that such inadequate editions were published mostly for commercial purposes and were aimed for the general readers' pastime, on the assumption that they would not know the difference (130-31).

Even Catherine II's official poet Vasilii Petrov, who knew English, chose to translate the first three books Milton's *Paradise Lost* into Russian prose in 1777, but since his incomplete translation was from the English original, it was already a milestone. Before Petrov, only Princess Mariia Khrapovitskaia produced a manuscript Russian translation of parts of Milton's *Paradise Lost* from the English original—Thomas Newton's 1749 edition (Boss "Milton's Influence" 29a). Ironically, the 1778 Russian translation of Milton's *Paradise Regained* by I. Greshishchev was published two years before the first published translation of Milton's long epic—the 1780 Archbishop Amvrosii's Russian prose translation *Paradise Lost*, so at least print, Russian readers were exposed to Milton's brief epic first. Later on in imperial Russia, Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* would often be published as one book and even under one title *Lost and Regained Paradise*, thus implying that the brief epic was the direct continuation of the long epic and must be read as two parts of one work, especially in the period between 1860s and the First World War, right after the Russian censorship of Milton's epics had been lifted.

Some of the most successful pre-Soviet Russian translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* or/and *Paradise Regained* that would be later reprinted in twenty-first century post-Soviet Russia were composed by nineteenth-century female authors, such as A. Shul'govskaia in prose (Sankt-Peterburg, 1878), E. Tur in prose (1891), O. Chiumina in verse (Sankt-Peterburg, 1899), and E. Kudasheva in verse (Moskva, 1910). The only translation by a male Russian author that became popular in imperial Russia and was actually reprinted earlier this year in modern Russia was the 1911 verse translation by N. A. Kholodkovskii (1858-1921), a famous Russian zoologist and supporter of Charles Darwin's theory. Also, Moscow University Professor A. Z. Zinov'ev's 1861 Russian prose translations of Milton's epics are still considered one of the best line-by-line renditions, and although they have not been reprinted since the nineteenth century, Zinov'ev's scholarly notes to Milton's *Paradise Regained* were still being used by the post-Soviet Russian translator S. A. Aleksandrovskii in his own twenty-thirst century verse rendition of Milton's brief epic. Zinov'ev was also young M. Iu. Lermontov's tutor in the late 1820s, so the famous Russian poet most likely first learned about Milton from his teacher, who played an important role in shaping his literary tastes. Understandably, early Russian translators of Milton's epics attempted to maintain silence or gloss over Milton's unorthodox Christian views and political life in their introductions in order to avoid censorship. Russian translators' official opinion of Milton's life and works ranged from emphasizing the biblical conformity of his epics (Stroganov 1745) and expressing reluctance for unnecessary elaboration on his biography (Petrov 1777) or being suspiciously silent on the subject (Greshishchev 1778), to engaging in proactive exposure of his artistic faults to disarm the potential critics (Amvrosii 1780) and relishing in full

disclosure of his eventful life (Shul'govskaia 1878, Kholodkovskii 1911). Strict Russian censorship can also explain the anonymous status of numerous late eighteenth-early nineteenth-century Russian translators.

The vast number of Russian translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* and their multiple reprinting in tsarist Russia undeniably testify to an incredible demand for Milton's epics, which in turn indicates his favorable career with the Russian public. However, there were very few official pronouncements on Milton by the Russian critics before nineteenth century, simply because literary criticism as such was not fully established until the Golden Age in Russian literature. Of course, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian poets and writers commented on Milton's works, but their remarks were often brief and did not amount to an essay on Milton. Even Pushkin, arguably Milton's most ardent champion in the pre-Soviet era, officially wrote only one brief, ten-page article that discussed the 1836 French translation of *Paradise Lost* by F. R. de Chateaubriand and the European controversy surrounding it. On the other hand, as Boss's works persuasively argue, Milton's poetic influence on Russian literature is clearly evident already in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century authors' works (e.g. anonymous imitators/plagiarists, Kantemir, Trediakovskii, Kheraskov, Derzhavin, Radishchev, Pushkin, Lermontov, Zhukovskii). Russian poets and writers often learned about Milton from their tutors, close friends, or foreign acquaintances during their European trips, who were translators of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (e.g. Kantemir, Pushkin, and Lermontov). The inventory of Russian authors' libraries was often used as proof of their familiarity with Milton's works (e.g. Kantemir, Pushkin, Zhukovskii).

In tsarist Russia, there formed two major positions in the reception of Milton that divided along political lines. The more conservative critics like N. M. Karamzin and E. F. Timkovskii viewed both of Milton's epics as deeply religious works with some unusual material and, at least officially, disapproved of Milton's radical politics, whereas the more liberal critics like E. Solov'ev and I. Ivanov found inspiration precisely in Milton's active political life, his anti-monarchical prose, and his rebellious Satan of *Paradise Lost*. Official Russian censorship was severe and any reformatory efforts by more liberal tsars like Catherine II (the Great) and Alexander I were short-lived, as any political unrest at home or abroad immediately prompted the return to the former precautionary measures, especially after the French Revolution of 1789. Hence, eighteen- and nineteenth-century Russian poets and writers praised Milton's religious works, but were cautious of endorsing Milton's regicide politics in print—only very brave, young, and censored authors like A. N. Radishchev and A. S. Pushkin dared to praise political Milton, because they themselves were engrossed in politics by fighting Russian oppressive censorship at the time. In fact, the politically active Radishchev, who was outspoken against serfdom and censorship, was almost quartered by the Court of Catherine II for publishing the uncensored version of his book that mentioned Milton in 1790, in the second year of the French Revolution—fortunately, his sentence was later reduced to a ten-year exile in Siberia. In his book against censorship, Radishchev placed Milton in the echelon of writers who “will be read until the human race is exterminated,” and some textual parallels revealed that the Russian author had read and drawn intellectual inspiration from Milton's *Areopagitica*. Similarly, twenty-six-year-old Pushkin was an ardent sympathizer of the infamous Decembrist Revolt of 1825 and a

censored political writer, who was Milton's greatest champion in imperial Russia before his untimely death in a duel at the age of thirty-eight. Pushkin's sympathetic portrayal of Milton in his well-known essay (published posthumously) made an enduring impact on Milton's reputation in Russia beyond his short life.

However, even before Pushkin's 1837 defense of Milton, famous Russian critic E. F. Timkovskii provided a very favorable view of *Paradise Lost* in his 1810 review of its new anonymous Russian prose translation published by "Platon Beketov's Typography." Calling Milton the "English Homer" (51), Timkovskii suggested that *Paradise Lost* rivaled Homer's and Virgil's epics in the universality of its theme and in the unity of its main action (123). While Timkovskii admitted that Satan is such an important character in Milton's epic, he had no doubt that the idea of Satan as a hero of *Paradise Lost* had surely been suggested "as a joke" by some critics (123). In his biographical sketch of Milton's life included in this review, Timkovskii did not support the poet's anti-monarchical sentiments and criticized the extreme measures taken against Charles I (51). It is clear that Timkovskii had access to Milton's *Paradise Lost* and knew English well enough to notice the discrepancies between the English original and the anonymous Russian translations of 1795 and 1810, which resulted from the Russian authors' translating Milton's epic from the French prose translations or even from the older Russian prose translations. After Pushkin's 1837 influential article, the next memorable evaluation of Milton was penned by the famous Russian literary critic V. G. Belinskii (1811-1870). In his infamous 1835 assessment of the epic's contradictory impulses, Belinskii eloquently labeled *Paradise Lost* "an apotheosis of uprising against authority" despite its author's intentions to "do something completely different," implying the

overpowering effect of historical environment on artistic creation (*Izbrannye filosofskie sochineniia* 401).

After Pushkin's and Belinskii's shaping of Milton's image in Russian literary criticism, the majestic portrayals of Milton by his Russian biographers sealed his favorable reputation in tsarist Russia. Although both Russian prose translators of *Paradise Lost*, Archbishop Amvrosii and Baron Stroganov, already revealed some of the details of Milton's biography based on Elija Fenton's *Life* in the second half of the eighteenth century (1745-1780), more elaborate, stand-alone biographies did not appear until the end of the nineteenth century. Inspired by the 1860 Russian translation of Thomas Macaulay's biographical essay on Milton, the two translations of Milton's *Moscovia* by E. P. Karnovich (1860) and Iu. V. Tolstoi (1874), provoked by M. P. Poludenskii's 1860 description of it, and the first translation of Milton's *Areopagitica* (1868, not in full), as well as the 1861 abolition of serfdom, three different Russian authors composed detailed laudatory accounts of Milton's life, openly praising his political involvement and prose writings (Shul'govskaia 1878, Solov'ev 1894, I. Ivanov 1896). All three of these nineteenth-century biographers focused on painting a historical, "non-poetic" Milton, whose political life was a direct inspiration for his works. These three Russian biographies became influential and paved the way for the Soviet image of Milton as a revolutionary like his Satan of *Paradise Lost*.

A. Shul'govskaya provided a detailed biographical account of Milton's life in the preface to her Russian prose translations of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* with fifty folio-size illustrations by the French artist Gustave Dore and published by A. F. Marcks. These particular illustrations of Milton's epics became a staple in imperial



Russian editions and remained so through the Soviet and the post-Soviet periods.

Shul'govskaia calls Milton an “indefatigable fighter for freedom of conscience and human rights” (xviii) and praises his *Areopagitica* (xii-xiii). The second edition of Shul'govskaia's prose translations of Milton's epics was published in 1895, and her rendition was unexpectedly resurrected by the post-Soviet publishers in 2004 and 2010.

Likewise, E. Solov'ev, in the first Russian monograph (80 pages) on Milton's life, admired Milton's prioritizing his civic duty over his poetic ambition during the Civil Wars and praised his self-sacrifice for the “right cause” and the common good (43).

Because Solov'ev strongly believed that Milton's *Paradise Lost* was autobiographical and that the English poet's active political life was directly responsible for its creation (58-59), he dared to compare Cromwell and Milton to Aeschylus' Prometheus and Satan of the opening books of Milton's *Paradise Lost* for the first time in Russian literary criticism. Finally, in his lengthy biographical essay on Milton, I. Ivanov calls Milton “a true wonder of self-awareness” (79), sanctifying Milton's life as “truly heroic” (85) and “highest practical expression of conscience” (79). Preferring Milton's social philosophy to that of Rousseau and Montesquieu (77), Ivanov considers Milton's political writings “the most complete encyclopedia of political ideas of the new time” (69), and his epics—a “chronicle of his epoch and a dramatic chorus of history” (29). Ivanov's observation that Milton was “a delicate observer of woman's nature” (53-54) and a “philosopher of woman's heart” (60) also encouraged another Russian author, M. Dubinskii, at the turn of the century, to compose an entry on Milton in his 1900 book-length study of the role of women in the lives of great and famous people.

The revolutionary sentiments around the year of 1905 produced some more unvarnished opinions of Milton from Russian critics and their praise of *Areopagitica*, followed by its full Russian translation and publication in 1907, right before the Russian censorship was reinstated already in the following year. Since 1908 also marked the 300th anniversary of Milton's birth, this event was proudly celebrated by tributary articles in well-known Russian periodicals by pre-Soviet Miltonists like Tiander, Kovalevskii, and Filatov, who focused on seventeenth-century England's history and Milton's active participation in and contribution to it with his influential revolutionary prose. Writing in the year of the 1905 Russian Revolution, Professor Kamburov stages the political conflict between the Presbyterian Parliament and the Independents, calling Milton a "literary leader of the Independents" (72). Emphasizing that Milton is not only a great English poet, but also a publicist with "immortal fame in the history of political writings" (72), Kamburov calls Milton "an apologist for the freedom of speech" and his *Areopagitica*—a "poetical apotheosis of free speech" (78). As if hinting at his own historical circumstances, Kamburov declares that "despite hundreds of years separating him from modern times, Milton's ideas have not lost their authority" (78). Similarly, in his long preface to the full 1907 Russian translation of Milton's *Areopagitica*, A. Rozhdestvenskii paints a stoic, uncompromising Milton who remained "true to his ideals" and devoted to his civic duty. Rozhdestvenskii was also familiar with Milton's *Civil Power*, both *Defenses*, *Eikonoclastes*, and *Ready and Easy Way* and quoted from them in his prefatory essay. Like Kamburov, Rozhdestvenskii laments the political situation of his day when he states that Milton's *Areopagitica* had not lost its meaning even today, after three-hundred years—"its words, though grey from age, still sound as the call of

youth and are as fresh as in its first birthday, especially for us, the Russians, one reluctantly wants to add.” Rozhdestvenskii seemed to imply that while it took fifty years for the ideas in Milton’s *Areopagitica* to materialize with the 1694 abolishment of the English censorship, Russians were still fighting this battle in their country already at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Like Kamburov and Rozhdestvenskii, Tiander makes Milton’s *Areopagitica* relevant to his own time on the heels of the reinstatement of Russian censorship in 1908. Tiander expresses nostalgia about the fact that “in the days of freedom in the year of 1905,—*Areopagitica* beautified the displays in the bookshops and found not few sympathetic readers” in Russia as well (19). Tiander dwells on seventeenth-century England’s politics and quotes at large from Milton’s anti-prelatical prose and *Areopagitica*. Tiander even analyzes Milton’s *Paradise Lost* in political terms, only he identifies the fallen angels with the Royal Cavaliers and the good angels with the “God-inspired Independents,” while making Satan’s features a mosaic of several leaders like Strafford, Laud, Charles I, and even Cromwell—“always brave, strong-willed, proud, and indiscriminate of the means” (23). Tiander’s particular allocation of England’s historical figures to Milton’s fictional characters is in sharp contrast to Solov’ev’s association of Milton’s Satan with his author himself. Tiander also believed in Milton’s need of “deep religiosity” (22), viewing his epics as “a monument to Puritanism” (23), and had no doubts that Milton’s *Paradise Regained* shared the same ideas with his *Paradise Lost*, because Christ of *Paradise Regained* was “a human being of unshakable morality, an ideal of Puritanism” (24). For the first time in Russian literary criticism, Tiander compared Milton to the great Russian novelist L. N. Tolstoy, arguing that both shared

their love of freedom and “fought for the freedom of religion from stagnancy, empty-wordiness, and formalism” (26). Like Kamburov, Rozhdestvenskii, and Tiander, Filatov draws parallels between Milton’s prose and his own historical time, exclaiming that Milton’s political pamphlets were “a fiery bouquet that burns and destroys the old life, but the old life is so strong and stupid that much of what Milton professed is still waiting its materialization” (47). Quoting Milton’s *Areopagitica* at large, Filatov also noted that Milton’s principle of incompatibility justifying a divorce was “still out of reach for us even now” (48). Calling Milton the “spiritual standard-bearer” of the Independents (49) and a “fiery standard-bearer of the people’s ideals” (50), Filatov finds Milton’s fanaticism “wonderful and noble” (46). Filatov also considers Milton’s epics “a symbol of a great epoch of liberty” (50), for Milton’s “paradisical gardens nevertheless recall England, his Satan commands like a good colonel, and his heavenly combats betray the militant temperament of the Puritans” (50).

Like Kamburov, Rozhdestvenskii, Tiander, and Filatov, the famous Russian historian Maksim Kovalevskii focused on Milton’s prose works and praised Milton as “a champion of people’s autocracy and of the autonomy of the individual.” However, unlike his contemporaries, Kovalevskii did not uncritically worship Milton the man, pointing out that he could be irascible and rude in his attitudes (122) and that Milton’s theory of freedom and tolerance was at odds with his intolerance towards his opponents (123). Kovalevskii also noted the stylistic shortcomings of Milton’s prose—too much evidence and too many examples interfere with the development of his main argument, as an overabundance of quotations in *Areopagitica* (123). While admiring Milton’s achievement, Kovalevskii admits that Milton’s ideas were not as original for his time as

many believed and that England did not follow Milton's proposed plan, since he was the last spokesman of the political thought first expressed by the anti-monarchists (480).

Although except for his *Moscovia* (tran. 1860, 1874) and *Areopagitica* (tran. 1868, 1907 in full), none of Milton's other prose works were translated in tsarist Russia, pre-Soviet authors are clearly aware of Milton's political tracts and often quote from them in their essays, by apparently providing their own Russian translation from Latin or/and English (e.g. Radishchev, Pushkin, Rozhdestvenskii, Tiander). For example, Pushkin quotes from Milton's *Eikonoclastes* and *First Defense*, and Radishchev's 1790 censored book against censorship has clear textual parallels with Milton's *Areopagitica*. Similarly, Rozhdestvenskii quotes in Russian from Milton's *Civil Power*, both *Defenses*, *Eikonoclastes*, and *Ready and Easy Way*. Even Milton's closet drama *Samson Agonistes* was not officially translated into Russian verse until the 1911 rendition by N. A. Brianskii—incidentally already after the 1905 Russian Revolution.

Chapter 2 of this reception history highlights Milton's revolutionary reputation with the Soviet Marxist critics. During the Soviet regime, official Marxist-Leninist ideology encouraged only a Marxist interpretation of Milton (or any other foreign author), especially after the publication of I. V. Stalin's 1950 article on Marxism and the problem of linguistics, which occasioned its compulsory memorization by the students in the philological departments. In fact, already in the early 1930s, when the first Soviet translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* by S. N. Protas'ev was in the works, former Prince, now Comrade, D. S. Mirsky adopted the Marxist view in his accompanying commentary. Although this edition remained unfinished and unpublished because of his arrest in 1937 due to the purges and the subsequent onset of World War II, Mirsky's 1934 manuscript

drew the parallel between the English Revolution and the Bol'shevik Revolution of 1917 on the basis of Milton's *Paradise Lost* for the first time *anywhere*, according to Boss ("Milton's Influence" 22a). Ironically, Prince Mirsky had fought against the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War, but after teaching in England during his exile, he unexpectedly joined the British Communist Party and returned home as Comrade Mirsky when it had already become the USSR. While still in England, Mirsky published the 1929 London edition of Milton's *Moscovia* that was likely responsible for securing his editorial position on the first Soviet edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which his arrest and that of his collaborators in 1937 as part of Stalin's Moscow show trials and purges, prevented from ever materializing in print.

Fearing Soviet censure of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, famous Soviet writers and critics Maksim Gor'kii (1868-1936) and A. V. Lunacharskii (1875-1933) rushed to save the English epic, by emphasizing its revolutionary features and ideological relevance to Soviet values. Gor'kii stressed the fact that *Paradise Lost* was the product of "the creativity of the masses" rather than that of Milton's individual genius, while Lunacharskii characterized Milton's Satan as a "cosmic revolutionary" and a hero of *Paradise Lost*, resurrecting E. Solov'ev's earlier notion of Milton's Satan as another Prometheus.

There was an enduring Soviet reluctance to publish Milton's works, particularly under Stalin's regime, so there was only one Soviet edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1982). Moreover, there was only one anthology of Milton's oeuvre published in the Soviet Union, which covered most of his poetry with the deliberate omission of his *Paradise Regained* and *Nativity Ode*, because these poems did not lend themselves as

easily to Marxist gloss and glorification of Satan and thus were usually ignored by Soviet textbooks and critics. Not only was Milton's *Paradise Regained* suspiciously omitted from the only Soviet anthology of Milton's works in 1976, it was never published separately or with *Paradise Lost* in Russia until the twenty-first century. This Soviet practice was in stark contrast to the pre-Soviet trend of publishing both epics together as one book at least forty-seven times within half a century since the 1860s. Even R. M. Samarin, the famous Soviet Miltonist, only addressed Milton's *Paradise Regained* in the shortest chapter of his 1964 book on Milton's oeuvre—his Marxist lens conveniently emphasized Jesus Christ's poverty and his socialist agenda “for the common good,” by interpreting the biblical context in the vein of the English Digger Gerard Winstanley. Since Samarin's brief chapter on *Paradise Regained* was euphemistically titled “For the sake of ‘common good,’” readers browsing the contents page might not have even realized which of Milton's works this section actually covered.

Professor Samarin's view of Milton was clearly shaped by Marx's idea that the English people used “the language, passions, and illusions borrowed from the Old Testament” for their bourgeois revolution, which resulted in the Soviet critic's doubting of Milton's religious sincerity and attributing his use of the biblical legend and form in *Paradise Lost* merely as an euphemistic disguise. Samarin insisted that Milton fully intended to create an epic of Revolution, but his unfortunate use of the “biblical masquerade” made his plan more obscure (238-39). In fact, Samarin classified Milton's *Paradise Lost* as “one of rare examples of a tragic artistic failure” in the history of literature (271), while considering Milton's Satan a success despite “the poet's aesthetically sinful religious conception” (270). As a popular professor and the head of

the Department of History of Foreign Literature at a prestigious Soviet university (Moscow State) since 1948, Samarin ventured to publish his lectures on the seventeenth-century foreign literatures together with those of his well-known colleague Iu. B. Vipper. This 1954 collection of Samarin's and Vipper's lectures, intended as an academic textbook, revealed such crude application of the Marxist-Leninist theories and Soviet propaganda to the seventeenth-century foreign literatures that even their Soviet colleagues could not avoid noticing and exposing it. Already in 1956, there was a backlash to Samarin's view of Milton's authorial intention in *Paradise Lost*, when four Soviet scholars co-authored two review articles of his 1954 textbook in the popular periodical *Zvezda (Star)*, in which they accused him of "modernizing the past" to make it relevant to the Soviet present (Klimenko et al 162).

Although Professor Samarin started publishing his views on Milton at the end of the 1940s and continued to do so until his untimely death in 1974, he did not live long enough to see the 1976 Soviet anthology of Milton's poetry, thus leaving the privilege of writing a monumental preface to this edition to his Shakespearean colleague A. A. Anikst. However, as an author of a 1964 monograph on Shakespeare's realism and an editor of a 1966 book of Soviet essays on Shakespeare, Samarin must have realized the disparity in the Soviet government's attitude towards Shakespeare and Milton that was reflected in the suspicious lack of Soviet editions of Milton's works. After all, in his 1966 preface to the co-edited book of essays with A. Nikoliukin titled *Shakespeare in the Soviet Union* and translated into English by Avril Pyman in its apparent aim at foreign readers, Samarin proudly stated that "Since the October Revolution, over 5,000,000 copies of Shakespeare's works have been published in twenty-eight languages spoken by



various peoples of the Soviet Union” (7). Moreover, “Shakespeare’s collected works translated into Russian in eight volumes, published by Iskusstvo in an edition of 225,000 copies, sold out on a subscription basis” (Samarin “Preface” 7). In fact, “The four volumes of Shakespeare’s works in English, edited and annotated by S. Dinamov, the publication of which was begun in 1937 and completed in 1939, have long since become a bibliographical rarity” (Samarin “Preface” 7). These impressive statistics of Shakespeare’s Russian presence were in sharp contrast with the state and availability of Milton’s oeuvre in Russian for almost sixty years in the Soviet Union before 1976, when the first Soviet edition of his poetry finally appeared, and even afterwards the gap had not been bridged during the Soviet period.

This fact was rather ironic since Milton’s fate in tsarist Russia had been drastically different—not only was his poetry much more readily available in numerous Russian and French translations, Milton became known and popular in eighteenth-century Russia even before Shakespeare. Thus, it was the Soviet regime with its ideological quest for socialist realism in art, particularly during the Stalinist period (1924-1953), that changed the balance in popularity between these two great English poets. In fact, in his article “On plays,” famous Soviet writer Maksim Gor’kii praised the realism of Shakespeare’s plays and championed them as a worthy model for the creation of a new Soviet socialist realistic drama about the true Soviet hero, V. I. Lenin—Gorkii’s advice “was accepted as a basic tenet of the programme of young Soviet drama in the thirties” (Samarin “Preface” 11). Such ideological state of Soviet affairs could also explain why Samarin’s 1948 doctoral dissertation on Milton’s oeuvre had not been published until

1964—the same year that his book on Shakespeare’s realism appeared in print, honoring Shakespeare’s quartercentenary.

The Western controversial debate surrounding the modernists’ attack on Milton that threatened his dislodgement from the Western literary canon in the 1930s did not affect his prestigious status in Soviet Russia at all. On the contrary, Soviet Miltonists like R. M. Samarin rushed to the English revolutionary poet’s defense and took Western modernist anti-Miltonists with their leader T. S. Eliot to task, accusing them in “bourgeois” liberalism and “Anglo-American decadence.” For example, in his article devoted to Milton’s 350<sup>th</sup> birthday, Samarin raged against D. Saurat, W. Knight, H. J. C. Grierson, and even nineteenth-century “reactionary Romantics” like Coleridge, Chateaubriand, and even Macauley. In fact, the Soviet ideological rivalry with the Western capitalist countries during the Cold War found a real champion in Samarin, who argued that the Russian “revolutionary-democrat” V. G. Belinskii, though not a Miltonist, was a true pioneer in solving the puzzle of Milton’s Satan in his 1838 article, *before* his contemporary Western Miltonists were even close to doing so (“Tvorchestvo Dzh. Mil’tona v otsenke V. G. Belinskogo” 428). According to Samarin, only the English Romantic poet Shelley in his 1821 essay approaches Belinskii’s critical genius and interpretive solution to the enigma of Milton’s Satan in *Paradise Lost* (“Tvorchestvo Dzh. Mil’tona v otsenke V. G. Belinskogo” 431). Moreover, in labeling Milton’s *Paradise Lost* as “an apotheosis of uprising against authority” despite its author’s original intentions, Belinskii had proved “the leading role of the Russian revolutionary-democratic thought in the literary studies of the nineteenth century” (Samarin “Tvorchestvo Dzh. Mil’tona v otsenke V. G. Belinskogo” 428).

The fact that Milton's honorary status was not shaken by the Western debate is even powerfully illustrated through the eventful life of his gifted Russian translator—the famous Soviet poet and artist Arkadii A. Shteinberg (1907-1984), who had dreamt about translating Milton's *Paradise Lost* since his tumultuous youth. Shteinberg was fluent in German from childhood and survived both World Wars, as well as the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. In an ironical twist of fate, Shteinberg's volunteering for the Red Army in the Second World War and his unexpected eight-year imprisonment in the Gulag by the Soviet government in 1944 (due to the Romanian Communists' report that implicated him in collecting enemy soldiers' songbooks) became partly responsible for the materialization of this poetic translation. After Stalin's death in 1953, Shteinberg could finally return to Moscow, following his official release from prison in 1952—Shteinberg's verse translation of *Paradise Lost*, published in the "Library of World Literature" multivolume series in 1976, has not been equaled in the intervening thirty-seven years.

As 1958 marked the 350th anniversary of Milton's birth worldwide, this important occasion was also happily celebrated by Russian newspaper articles from Soviet Miltonists like Anikst (1958), Samarin (1958), and Kon (1959). These Miltonists' laudatory epithets succinctly summarized Milton's official Soviet reputation: in their eyes, Milton was the "poet of the English Revolution," a brave fighter for Truth and Justice, a "mighty talent" (Anikst, Samarin), and a "sociopolitical thinker" (Kon). Moreover, Milton's official, academic fate in post-Stalinist Russia improved significantly, as Khrushchev's de-Stalinization efforts promised more intellectual freedom to the Russian scholars. Consequently, Soviet professor Samarin's vast and

influential scholarship on Milton in the 1950s and 1960s inspired young Russian students' dissertations, including those of his own graduate students at Moscow State University like T. I. Paramonova, even before the first Soviet anthology of Milton's works could make such an impact. Three important Russian dissertations on Milton were published within the five-year period from 1969 to 1974: their topics include Milton's *Samson Agonistes* (Bortnik 1969), his prose writings (Paramonova 1972), and the Russian language of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century translations of *Paradise Lost* (Maksudova 1974). Not surprisingly, no dissertations were devoted to Milton's *Paradise Regained* or his devotional poetry like *Nativity Ode* and Psalms during the Soviet period.

As the Soviet ideological grip relaxed during M. Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* in the 1980s, new-generation Miltonists revisited Milton's writings without the oppressive restrictions imposed by official Marxist dogma at the universities. Consequently, Miltonists like A. A. Chameev, whose scholarly activity has straddled the Soviet and post-Soviet eras, could reconsider Milton's works and in the process find faults in earlier Soviet interpretations. For example, already in 1986, in his seminal book on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Chameev disputed Samarin's portrayal of Milton's long epic as the result of the English poet's original "conception of a revolutionary epic" (*Dzhon Mil'ton i ego poema* 37). Instead, Chameev pointed out that since Milton's conception of *Paradise Lost* began already in the late 1630s, as the English poet's preliminary sketches suggested, the alleged revolutionary epic was actually conceived even before the English Revolution (*Dzhon Mil'ton i ego poema* 37). According to Chameev, Samarin "modernized Milton's works and not always accurately placed political accents" and

suffered from a “tendency to exaggerate Milton’s political insight and to diminish the place of religious-moral problems in his works” (*Dzhon Mil’ton i ego poema* 9). Hence, the goal of Chameev’s monograph on Milton’s *Paradise Lost* was to examine its moral-philosophical problems in depth.

Chameev also disagrees with the established Soviet view that explains the enigmatic role of Milton’s Satan in *Paradise Lost*, by revealing the contradictions between the Republican Milton and the Puritan Milton. In contrast, Chameev considers Milton’s anti-tyrannical revolutionary impulses not only in direct harmony with his Puritan religious beliefs, but as their derivative, because Puritan obedience to God involved fighting the earthly King’s tyranny (*Dzhon Mil’ton i ego poema* 90). Chameev exposes a mutually exclusive contradiction in the Soviet critics’ assessment of Milton’s authorial intention. Since, as a religious man, Milton could only imagine God as the source of the Good and only Satan as the embodiment of Evil, then to “state that the English poet strived to embody the idea of the Revolution in the symbolic image of the devil would mean either that Milton was an atheist, who sincerely rejected religious dogma, or that he had renounced his revolutionary beliefs during the Restoration” (*Dzhon Mil’ton i ego poema* 36).

However, Chameev’s 1986 book still betrayed some Soviet agenda, for example, when he predictably championed Christopher Hill’s book on Milton and contrasted its methods with the conference papers devoted to the tercentenary of *Paradise Lost* in 1967, edited by B. Rajan, which allegedly lacked any interpretations of the epic’s “revolutionary pathos” (*Dzhon Mil’ton i ego poema* 8-9). Because of the Marxist perspective used to frame his work, Christopher Hill’s books were quickly translated into

Russian and published in the Soviet Union without any ideological uneasiness that accompanied the “decadent” scholarship of “bourgeois” authors. In this vein, Chameev objected to the “false” methodologies of some Western Miltonists, who applied “formalist and structuralist” theories to Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, instead appreciating the contribution of J. H. Hanford, E. M. W. Tillyard, and D. Bush on the subject of philosophical and moral problems of Milton’s epic (*Dzhon Mil’ton i ego poema* 8-9).

Even a cursory look at Soviet textbooks of English literature would reveal that most Soviet critics conveniently seemed to forget that seventeenth-century England’s Puritanism was already in itself an expression of revolutionary convictions, so their divorcing of Christian religion from the English revolution was effectively unhistorical. For example, A. A. Anikst, in his 1945 textbook on the history of English literature, believed that “the Puritan Milton sides with God, while the Republican Milton fully sympathizes with Satan” (191). Similarly, G. V. Anikin and N. P. Mikhal’skaya, in their co-authored 1975 textbook on the history of English literature, stated that Milton’s Puritan views came into conflict with his revolutionary beliefs, because his “religious views demanded submission to the divine will, [whereas his] revolutionary convictions called for the fight against despotism” (102). These Soviet critics predictably overlooked the historical fact that in their uprising against the authority of the Anglican Church and the King, revolutionary Puritans relied on the greater authority of God and the Bible—the Independents’ execution of Charles I in their eyes was only their obedient execution of God’s will.

If Soviet studies on Milton involved pairings of two authors, it was customarily Milton’s works in the evaluation of Russian poets and literary critics like A. S. Pushkin,

V. A. Zhukovskii, and V. G. Belinskii (i.e. V. V. Vinogradov, R. M. Samarin, M. I. Gillel'son, A. S. Ianushkevich, M. G. Sokolianskii). However, the Soviet scholarship on Milton at the end of 1980s, during Gorbachev's reforms and rapprochement to the West, started to show engagement with comparative studies showcasing Milton's influence on English poets like Lord Byron and Shelley, or even on Russian poets like M. Iu. Lermontov (e.g. N. Ya. D'iakonova, A. A. Chameev, V. T. Oleinik). During the Stalinist era, it was considered a punishable anti-Soviet sentiment even to imply that Russian or Soviet authors were somehow influenced by the Western "bourgeois" writers, so very late Soviet literary practices revealed scholarly liberation from such ideological paradigms. Therefore, only in post-Soviet Russia, could Milton's influence on great Russian authors like A. S. Pushkin, F. M. Dostoevskii, and M. A. Bulgakov, become officially recognized in comparative studies by Professor A. N. Gorbunov and included in his 2006 edition of Milton's complete poetry—the first edition to include Milton's *Paradise Regained* and *Nativity Ode* since tsarist Russia.

Chapter 3 traces the views of Milton held by modern Russian critics of the post-Soviet era, such as I. Garin, T. Pavlova, E. Vitkovskii, E. Teterina, O. Mos'kina, E. Shashkova, A. Gorbunov, V. Zabaluev, L. Summ, E. Haltrin-Khalturina, and M. Sokolova. These critics are the prominent representatives of the post-Soviet scholarship on Milton, and their efforts furnish a fairly clear picture of the direction in which criticism is headed. Since Chapter 3 identifies and examines Milton criticism which has never before been considered in the West, much more detailed annotation and analysis take place. In the post-Soviet Russia, Slavic Miltonists are free at last to publish their thoughts about Milton's life and works without regard to the government's opinion on the

subject, and thus there is a blossoming of Milton studies on various topics among young scholars. Post-Soviet change in ideology can already be seen even in titles of Russian books (I. I. Garin's *Prophets and Poets* 1994), articles (E. V. Pleshakova's "The Transformation of the Biblical Image of Abaddon in Milton and Klopstock"), and conferences (*Religion and Literature* in Moscow 1999) that reflect a newfound focus on the religious aspect of literature—a forbidden subject during Soviet rule.

In 1992, with the birth of a new, gradually more democratic Russia, Professor of History T. V. Antonova wrote a book on the nineteenth-century struggle for the freedom of the Russian press that also showcased Milton's *Areopagitica* and its liberating influence on Russian progressive thinkers' fight against censorship in the period of 1862-1882. Four years later, Antonova produced an article on Milton's freedom-loving spirit in Russia that extended her ideas of Milton's historical influence on nineteenth-century Russian liberals. Much like developments in the aftermath of the 1905 Russian Revolution, Milton's *Areopagitica* became relevant again in the wake of the 1991 collapse of the Soviet empire, when liberation of the Russian press was at stake. Antonova's literary efforts to revive Milton's ideas for the contemporary Russian reality were surely timely and patriotic, and offered a historical perspective on the Russian perpetual struggle with ideological censorship, whether in tsarist or Soviet times. Antonova's study also demonstrated a post-Soviet historian's renewed interest in Milton's ideas, as the history doctoral student O. V. Bodrov's 2002 dissertation on the famous Russian historian M. M. Kovalevskii, who wrote on Milton, would later indicate.

Within six years of Russia's post-Soviet status, two biographical reassessments of Milton's life and works testified to the ideological freedom of scholars to present



Milton's religious side without chastising him for being "misguided" by his Christian beliefs. Only three years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, I. I. Garin composed his 1994 monograph-size essay (118 pages) on Milton that sought to reveal the false nature of Milton's Soviet image as a revolutionary, carefully constructed by the academic ideologues of the Soviet regime. In contrast, Garin painted Milton as a poet-prophet and "English Luther and Calvin" (487), who in the aftermath of the English Revolution, became disillusioned with the negative transformation of his idol Oliver Cromwell and thus decided to portray him as evil Satan in his *Paradise Lost* (578). Similarly, in his *Samson Agonistes*, Milton-Samson realized the "erroneousness of his path" and in his repentance brought down the temple's roof on himself (Garin 586). For Garin, Milton's *Paradise Regained* testified to Milton's deep religiosity and to the "final victory of Christ over Satan in Milton's soul" (582). Garin argued that even Milton's political pamphlets, which the Soviet critics had heralded for their revolutionary image of Milton, were "theological prose" full of "ecstatic" passages by Milton as a mystic and a visionary (558-59).

The first full Russian biography of Milton's life was written by a female post-Soviet Russian scholar T. A. Pavlova and published by the Russian Political Encyclopedia press in 1997. This biography narrated Milton's life in the context of historical events and took a closer look at Milton's prose works, especially those that had not been known in Russia before. In the process of her narration of Milton's biography, Pavlova also drew portraits of other historical, political, and cultural figures of Milton's epoch. Pavlova's biography included a useful chronology, a bibliography, and rare illustrations (what she calls "photo-documents"). Pavlova considered Milton's *Paradise*

*Lost* as a “new Bible, a new Apocalypse” (403) and a product of Milton’s service to “eternal ideals and divine vocation” (399). While Pavlova did not doubt Milton’s republicanism and his support of the English Revolution, she believed that “the reasons for Satan’s rebellion turn out to be the reasons for the Revolution’s defeat”—the revolutionaries’ moral flaws and hunger for power caused their betrayal of the Revolution’s ideals (419). Pavlova also insisted that the meaning of Milton’s *Paradise Regained* was “more ethical than religious,” because his Jesus was “more of a stoic than a savior” (446) and because he regained paradise for man only with his obedience, and not with his voluntary self-sacrifice (436). Hence, Garin’s and Pavlova’s post-Soviet biographical works on Milton certainly represented an ideological shift in new Russia from the official Marxist interpretation of Milton and the English Revolution to a renewed interest in Milton’s religion, however unorthodox it may seem to new Russian Eastern Orthodox Christian readers.

Most remarkably, Russian poet S. A. Aleksandrovskii celebrated the start of the new millennium and Jesus Christ’s two-thousand-year anniversary by resurrecting Milton’s *Paradise Regained* in Russian print with his own 2000 poetic translation of Milton’s brief epic—its first translation since imperial Russia. Moreover, since Milton’s *Paradise Regained* was not only ignored by Soviet translators, but never appeared in print even in its old tsarist Russian translation during the Soviet regime, Aleksandrovskii’s effort also signaled the first separate publication of Milton’s brief epic in over a century. This 2001 edition also included all of Milton’s English sonnets in the debut translation by A. P. Prokop’ev, as well as an afterward by E. V. Vitkovskii, the translator of Milton’s *Il Penseroso* later featured in Gorbunov’s 2006 academic edition of

Milton's complete poetry. Previously, all of Milton's sonnets, like his other shorter poems, had appeared only in Iu. B. Korneev's Soviet translation in the seminal 1976 Soviet edition. This post-Soviet edition chose engravings by G. Dore and R. Westall for its illustrations. E. V. Vitkovskii, a late Soviet translator of Dutch playwright Joost van den Vondel's dramas and a post-Soviet author of the afterword to S. A.

Aleksandrovskii's poetic translation of Milton's *Paradise Regained*, attempted to explain the reason behind the Soviet reluctance to reprint or to make a modern translation of Milton's brief epic. As Vitkovskii eloquently put it: during the Soviet rule, Milton's *Paradise Regained*, "a poem more about God than a demon, was not translated or published to be on the safe side, apparently following the logic that one should not talk about God much: what does not exist should not be talked about, and consequently, it is better not to talk about God or He may start existing somehow" (163-64). Thus, the new Russian translation of Milton's *Paradise Regained* by A. A. Aleksandrovskii and its first separate publication since imperial Russia in 2001 signaled a new ideological era strengthened by the freedom of the press and religious tolerance.

Professor A. N. Gorbunov is clearly the leading scholar on Milton in post-Soviet Russia, as well as an academic who directs dissertations on Milton and other Renaissance authors in the Philology Department at the Moscow State University (see his doctoral student O. V. Mos'kina's 2006 dissertation on Milton's early poetry, as well as his doctoral student V. N. Zabaluev's 2008 dissertation on the English masques, including Milton's *Comus*). Gorbunov is also active in the Russian Orthodox Church and even holds the title of "deacon." As Penelope Minney, who joined the staff of the Russian Orthodox University and later "found herself sharing teaching [Gorbunov's] Second-

Year group” at Moscow State University, puts it: “Professor Gorbunov is ordained as a deacon, and combines his duties in the church of St. Nicholas in Bolshaya Ordinka with his work as a full-time member of the staff at the university” (“Preface” 5). Gorbunov and Minney also co-edited a volume of conference papers, titled *Through Each Others Eyes: Religion and Literature*, from the colloquium that took place at the Library of Foreign Literature in Moscow in January 1999, at the invitation of its Director Katerina Genieva—Gorbunov’s former research student. As Minney points out, “Many of the senior staff at the Library of Foreign Literature—including the Director—are his former research-students, as are all the postgraduates who have contributed to this volume” (“Preface” 5). Exposing Soviet ideological bias towards religious content in foreign literature, K. Genieva told P. Minney that “she had written articles on Charles Dickens in the Soviet era, and as she compared Soviet translations with the originals, she noticed that again and again Dickens’s meaning had been distorted, and the distortions were all to conceal the religious undertones. As examples multiplied she began to realize the full religious import of Dickens as a writer” (“Preface” 5). The same can be said about Milton, whose more straightforwardly theological *Paradise Regained* and *Nativity Ode* were completely omitted from the only Soviet edition of his poetry, and whose works were not published outside of the 1976 Soviet anthology with the rare exception of a separate edition of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* that appeared in 1982.

It is significant that in 1999, just eight years after the collapse of the officially atheistic Soviet Union, such a religion-themed conference was organized in Moscow and drew sufficient interest from young Russian scholars. Gorbunov’s church title is another mark of the drastic political change in post-Soviet Russia, since one would not find

similar affiliations among the Soviet Miltonists like A. A. Anikst and R. M. Samarin. Professor Gorbunov does not consider Milton's *Paradise Lost* or Pushkin's *The Captain's Daughter* as literary endorsements of political rebellion and thus strongly disagrees with the evaluation of Milton's epic as "an apotheosis of uprising against authority" by the Russian nineteenth-century literary critic Belinskii (655). Gorbunov also believes that both of Milton's epics are tightly connected and should not be read apart, especially *Paradise Regained* that is the direct continuation of *Paradise Lost* and its theme of "justifying the ways of God to men" (659). In fact, Gorbunov's 2006 "academic" edition of Milton's poetry is the first Russian edition to restore Milton's *Paradise Regained* and *Nativity Ode* to the English author's poetic canon since imperial Russia. Since there has been a recurrent interest of Miltonists towards Milton's influence on Russian literature, Gorbunov's comparative studies of Milton and Pushkin, Milton and Dostoevsky, and Milton and Bulgakov shed some light on this subject and thus are annotated in this chapter in much more detail.

Most importantly, Gorbunov's 2006 scholarly edition of Milton's complete poetry is not only the first such academic edition since the 1976 Soviet Milton anthology, that unlike the latter actually includes Milton's *Paradise Regained* and *Nativity Ode*, it also features new post-Soviet Russian poetic translations of Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, *Nativity Ode*, and Psalms by a female Russian poet T. Iu. Stamova, as well as of Milton's other short poems by post-Soviet Russian poets A. Zuevskii and E. V. Vitkovskii (the latter is the famous Soviet translator of Joost van den Vondel's trilogy). In addition, post-Soviet Russian editions of Milton's *Paradise Lost* started to publish William Blake's and Henri Fuseli's illustrations instead of, or in addition to, those by Gustave Dore,

which was not the case in pre-Soviet and Soviet Russia. Contemporary Russia's ideological freedom is also manifested in the post-Soviet reprinting of the nineteenth-century Russian prose and verse translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* by female authors A. Shul'govskaia, E. Tur, and O. Chiumina (2004, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2013), and of the tsarist poetic translation of *Samson Agonistes* by N. A. Brianskii (2007, 2009) and of *Paradise Lost* by N. A. Kholodkovskii (2013). In post-Soviet Russia, even middle-school children have access to Milton's *Paradise Lost* in R. P. Aldonina's 2006 Russian translation-adaptation of Milton's long epic. This edition is lavishly illustrated by contemporary Russian artist Andrei Mazin and is published in the series of "Myths of the Peoples of the World". This edition's 4,000 copies indicate quite a demand for such an adaption among middle-school students. Since the year of 2008 marked the four-hundredth anniversary of Milton's birth, this event was celebrated by long articles from post-Soviet Miltonists, like A. A. Chameev and E. V. Khaltrin-Khalturina, and by new editions of Milton's poetry by Russian publishers like "Eksmo" and "Vita Nova."

Somewhat exhausted by the Soviet political appropriation of Milton, most of the post-Soviet dissertations on Milton stay away from critical debates about Milton and instead focus on Milton's poetry from the formalist perspective (Teterina, Mos'kina, Shashkova, Sokolova). For example, Elena Teterina (2004) reports on the epic traditions in Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the problem of its specific genre; Oksana Mos'kina (2006) examines the problem of Milton's sources for his early lyrical poems; and Ekaterina Shashkova (2006) analyzes the influence of Greco-Roman heritage on Milton's early lyrical poems and his *Paradise Lost*. Although these research topics on Milton are not

new, especially in the West, the fact that doctoral students of post-Soviet Russia choose Milton for their dissertations is significant because the last Soviet dissertations on Milton were in the late 1960s and early 1970s (E. Bortnik, T. Paramonova, E. Maksudova). Also, the post-Soviet dissertations show much greater awareness of Western scholarship on Milton, which testifies to the wider availability of the English-language scholarship either through the local libraries or the internet in modern Russia. For example, E. Teterina uses John Leonard's 2000 edition of *Paradise Lost* for her analysis, and 75 out of 244 entries in her bibliography are all English-language sources. The post-Soviet dissertations on Milton also reveal young Russian scholars' interest in Milton's early poetry and genres previously ignored or understudied in imperial Russia and the former Soviet Union, such as Milton's *Comus* and the English masque in general. Professor Gorbunov's doctoral student, V. N. Zabaluev devotes his 2008 dissertation to the study of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English masque from Sidney to Milton, in hopes of filling this void in Russian scholarship. Marina Sokolova's 2011 dissertation on Milton also treads new territory in Russian studies as it investigates the idiosyncrasies of the time-space characteristics of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

A few post-Soviet graduate students outside of English literature are quite original in their research topics and/or methods. For example, Tat'iana Salynskaia's 2000 dissertation performs a "linguistic content-analysis" on Iu. V. Tolstoi's 1874 Russian translation of Milton's *Moscovia* to investigate "the lexical problems of the linguistic and literary Anglo-Russian connections" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Similarly, Vladislav Bortnikov's 2012 master's thesis unconventionally compares V. Petrov's 1777 Russian prose translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* with the Russian

novelist D. I. Fonvizin's *Kallisfen* (1786) to examine the role of "textual category" in late eighteenth-century Russian literary language. Hence, Milton's wide appeal in post-Soviet Russia is clearly indicated by the fact that young Russian doctoral students, who are not English literature majors, find creative ways to incorporate Milton's works in their dissertational projects in fields as diverse as Russian history, Russian linguistics, and Russian language and literature. The two most recent graduate research studies by M. Sokolova (2011) and V. Bortnikov (2012) also serve as proof that academic interest towards Milton is alive not only in Russian major cities like Moscow and St. Petersburg, but even at the universities of Nizhniy Novgorod, Ekaterinburg, and Orekhovo-Zuevo (T. Salynskaia 2000).

The rest of the post-Soviet scholarship on Milton consists of numerous articles, most of which are comparative studies of Milton's poetry and the works of German, English, or Russian authors, that are inspired by religious themes, like Klopstock's *Messias*, Coleridge's *Christabel*, and Dostoevskii's *The Brothers Karamazov* (E. Pleshakova, A. Gorbunov, and E. Haltrin-Khalturina). Some of these articles are papers published as conference proceedings, which are almost impossible to obtain in hard copy at Western libraries, but may be available on the internet website of the Russian conference (D. Ivanov, E. Pleshakova). However, since post-Soviet Russian scholars are now more at liberty to travel abroad, they sometimes present their research in English translation at the Western conferences and then publish it in English-language conference proceedings (A. Gorbunov, V. Zabaluev).

It is worth noting that most Soviet and post-Soviet scholars who widely publish on Milton or edit the Russian translations of his works do not consider themselves



Miltonists as is customary in the West, because they would view it as too narrow of an expertise since they also publish on other English authors like Shakespeare, Donne, Coleridge, Chaucer, or even American writers (Anikst, Samarin, Chameev, Gorbunov). Typically, these Russian scholars work and lecture in the university departments of Foreign Literatures, so they are expected to know the entire canon of British, French, German, Spanish, or American literature (based on their foreign language of expertise) rather than specialize in just one foreign author. Sometimes they focus on certain centuries and offer survey courses on that time period covering foreign authors from different literatures.

It has been customary for both pre-Soviet and Soviet editions of Milton's works to use the soft sign in the Russian transliteration of Milton's name, indicated by ['] symbol in Latin script—"Mil'ton." Most post-Soviet Russian editions continue this tradition by still using the soft sign; however, a few of them have dropped it, approximating Milton's name closer to its English version (see for example, Gorbunov's 2006 scholarly edition and the 2010 gift edition by "Eksmo"). The Works Cited page adheres to reflecting this difference in transliteration.

In pre-Soviet Russia, it was customary not only to print Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* together in one volume, but also to combine their titles into one title as if it were one work or two parts of a whole, so the title page would read *Poteriannyi i vozvrashchennyi rai: poemy—Paradise Lost and Regained: Poems* or literally *Lost and Regained Paradise: Poems*. The Soviet editions of Milton's works clearly separated the two epics, by never printing *Paradise Regained* at all. The post-Soviet editions have resurrected the pre-revolutionary Russian custom by not only

printing Milton's epics together, but also reprinting the pre-Soviet translations and/or editions that combined them into one volume and even title.

## CHAPTER II

### PRE-SOVIET CRITICISM OF JOHN MILTON (1745-1917)

The acquaintance of Russian readers with Milton was initiated in the middle of the eighteenth century when the first translations of his works appeared. The first Russian translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* was a manuscript completed in 1745 by Baron A. G. Stroganov, a member of Russian legendary dynasty. Stroganov did not know English and based his *prose* translation not on the original, but on the French prose translation of Milton's epic (*Le Paradis perdu* of 1729, attributed to Dupre de Saint-Maur). However, Stroganov's manuscript translation did not get published till 1820—the 75-year delay of its official publication was apparently caused by political and religious reasons, such as the likely fear of the denial by the Holy Synod (anon. *Moskovskiiia vedomosti* 4 [1837]: 316). Stroganov's biographical account of Milton's life ("Zhitiio") that preceded his translation represented the first biography of Milton in Russian and was based on Elijah Fenton's *Life*. Stroganov took pains to emphasize the "biblical foundation" of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the absence of "pagan elements" in this divinely inspired poem (Boss "Milton's Influence" 28a). Even though Stroganov's prose translation of *Paradise Lost* with his introduction on Milton's biography circulated only in manuscript, his translation of Fenton's *Life* ("Zhizn' g. Mil'tona") was published

already in June of 1780, in the periodical *St. Petersburg Messenger*, apparently on the Russian poet V. G. Ruban's initiative (Boss *The Rise of* 40).

In the meantime, there were several partial Russian prose translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* by tsarist poets. In fact, the second half of the 1770s signaled what Valentine Boss calls "Miltonian awakening in Russia," for there was one attempted translation of *Paradise Lost* almost every year (*Milton and the Rise of* 46-47). For example, the official imperial Russian translator and reader royal Vasilii Petrov (1736-1799), who was famous for his translation of Vergil's *Aenied* and was even called the "second Lomonosov" by Catherine the Great and his other admirers, or Catherine II's "pocket poet" by N. I. Novikov and his other detractors, chose to translate the first 3 books of Milton's long epic into Russian prose in 1777. However odd Petrov's choice to render Milton's verse into Russian prose rather than poetry, he was still a pioneer in translating from the English original rather than from the French prose renditions. Despite his official status as the Russian Royal Court translator under the Queen's protection since 1768, Petrov's decision to translate only the first 3 books of *Paradise Lost* may still be explained by his caution to reveal Milton's theological unorthodoxy in Book 4 that depicts pre-lapsarian marriage and love-making in Eden. Petrov's reluctance to provide biographical details of Milton's life may be attributed to the same political motive of cautious non-disclosure, as well as to his likely awareness of the fate of Stroganov's manuscript translation.

The first published and complete Russian translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* did not appear till 1780 and was produced by Amvrosii Serebrennikov—the Prefect of the Moscow Academy and later the Archbishop of Ekaterinoslav. However, like

Stroganov's manuscript translation, Amvrosii's published translation was rendered into Russian prose and was based on the French prose translation as well. In the preface to his 1780 Russian prose translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Amvrosii bravely exposed Milton's religious radicalism for the first time in Russian print as a preemptive attack to disarm his potential critics. Enumerating the "defects" of Milton's long epic, Moscow academician Amvrosii criticized Milton for assuming that the world was made not from nothing, but from some substance that existed even before creation, for insisting on marriage in Paradise in Book 4, for making Angel Raphael a mouthpiece for materialism when he was able to eat human food in Book 5, and most of all, for holding Arian views (Amvrosii, quoted in Boss "Milton's Influence" 30a). Even though Amvrosii revealed most of Milton's theological heresies in his poetic art, he stayed silent on Milton's political radicalism, such as his republicanism and regicide politics, hoping to save not only his translation from the censure of the Holy Synod, but also his own fate from the unpredictable reaction of his Queen, Catherine the Great.

Ironically, the first Russian translation of Milton's *Paradise Regained*, undertaken by Ivan Greshishchev in prose, was published by Moscow University in Russia already in 1778, even prior to the official publication of Amvrosii's complete translation of *Paradise Lost* in 1780. Consequently, Russian readers unfamiliar with Stroganov's manuscript translation of 1745 were first officially introduced to Milton in print with his second epic, *Paradise Regained*. However, those readers were not introduced to Milton the man, because Greshishchev remained silent on Milton's life by not offering a biographical preface. Moreover, since Greshishchev did not know English and his Russian prose translation of Milton's *Paradise Regained* was based upon the French

prose translation of the brief epic (probably by Abbe Mareuil's *Paradis reconquis*) rather than from the English original, as is clearly stated on the title page, those Russian readers were also left in the dark about the poetic nature of Milton's epic verse. Within a decade of its initial publication, Greshishchev's prose translation of *Paradise Regained* was republished twice, already in 1785 and 1787. The Russian existence of Milton's epics only in prose translations contributed to the late eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century readers' occasional mistaking them for the Russian translations of the Bible, which would also explain the epics' extreme popularity and their being frequently bound together into one volume in the tsarist publishing practice. The first *poetic* translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* did not appear until 1830, and therefore, for half a century since its first publication in full translation in 1780, Milton's long epic made its appearance to Russian readers only in prose. Actually, even some of Milton's shorter poems like *Il Penseroso* were presented to the eighteenth-century Russian readers in *prose* translation and were often done from the French translation as well. For example, Platon Beketov's 1780 Russian *prose* translation of Milton's "Il Penseroso" from the French was featured in the Russian periodical *Sanktpeterburgskii vestnik* (*Saint Petersburg Messenger*) under the curious title: "*Il' Pensero ili Mysli Miltonovy*" ("*Il' Pensero or Milton's Thoughts*").

Despite the efforts to save Milton's epics from censors by such well-intentioned Russian translators as V. Petrov and I. Greshishchev (who establish an interesting pattern of not revealing much of Milton's biography in their introductions), both *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* were proscribed by the tsarist censors during the Nikolaevan era, a common charge against the brief epic being that Milton so "humanized the figure of Jesus that little remained of his divinity" (Boss *Milton and the Rise of* 43).

Milton was the first English literary figure of whom Russian writers became aware in the first half of the eighteenth century, so Milton's Russian career in the early 1730s started completely independently of Shakespeare. Moreover, Elizabethan literature had remained unknown to Russian minds until 1748, when Shakespeare's name was mentioned for the first time. French language and literature dominated the imperial Russian culture, so such a fate of English language and poetry in Russia was not unusual. In fact, Alexander Pope was the first English poet to break this tendency by being known in Russia during his own lifetime (Boss "Milton's Influence" 23).

Milton's poetic influence on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian literature is undeniable not only in the anonymous works of tsarist Russian imitators and plagiarists, but also in the poetry of such famous Russian authors like A. Kantemir, V. K. Trediakovskii, M. M. Kheraskov, G. V. Derzhavin, A. N. Radishchev, V. A. Zhukovskii, A. S. Pushkin, and M. Iu. Lermontov. Moreover, several of these Russian poets had tutors, close friends, or foreign acquaintances during trips abroad, who themselves happened to be translators of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and thus probably introduced them to the English epic and its author. For example, Russian Prince Kantemir most likely learned about Milton from his diplomatic trip to England on behalf of Queen Anne in 1732 and from his Italian tutor Paolo Rolli, whose 1736 Italian translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* Kantemir could read fluently and even shared a folio copy with his royal sister in St. Petersburg, Mariia Dmitrievna (Boss "Milton's Influence" 24a). Kantemir was already fluent in both Italian and Latin, and his English significantly improved during his prolonged stay in England, where he was dispatched shortly after the 1730 Russian Constitutional crisis that put Ann on the throne. Similarly, one of Pushkin's

teachers was Efim Liutsenko, who translated both of Milton's epics into Russian from French translations in 1824. In addition, one of Pushkin's "poetic" teachers was V. A. Zhukovskii, who read Milton's *Paradise Lost* very early and hoped to translate it all his life, but succeeded in rendering only the first few lines of the English epic's Book 1 into Russian verse. However, Lermontov's tutor in the late 1820s, Professor of Moscow University A. Z. Zinov'ev, later became a famous academic translator of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* because of his 1861 Russian prose renditions of both English epics, which are still considered one of the best line-by-line Russian prose translations. Also, the personal libraries of Kantemir, Pushkin, and Zhukovskii had some editions of Milton's works in their inventory, further testifying to these Russian authors' familiarity with, and interest in, the English poet. For example, the inventory of Prince Kantemir's library revealed that the Russian poet, fluent in Latin and Italian, possessed Milton's *Defensio secunda*, *Of Education*, *Paradise Lost*, and Rolli-Milton's *Il Paradiso Perduto* (1736), which had been already placed on the *Index* (Boss "Milton's Influence" 23-24).

Prince Antiokh Kantemir (1708-1744), the founding father of Russian literature and of modern Russian verse (as characterized by V. G. Belinskii) became Milton's "messenger" for Russian society—through him Milton became the first English poet to influence Russian literature. In fact, Kantemir's "First Ode" (c 1735) was the earliest Russian poem to be written under the influence of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Boss *Milton and the Rise of* 4). In the preface to his 1742 Russian translation of Horace, Kantemir actually mentioned "glorious Milton's *Paradise Lost*" (Boss "Milton's Influence" 23b). In addition, Milton's unconventional use of blank verse for his English epics must have



inspired Kantemir to choose blank verse for his own attempt at a Russian epic—the unfinished *Petrida* (*Petriade*). At least Kantemir scholars have yet to explain his unorthodox poetic choice in Russian language otherwise (Boss “Milton’s Influence” 25b). Kantemir’s poetic development abroad curiously resulted in his new theory of Russian prosody outlined in his *Khariton Makentin’s Letter* (1743), which championed unrhymed verse in response to Trediakovskii’s 1735 tract on versification that introduced the “syllabo-tonic” verse into Russian poetry. V. K. Trediakovskii (1703(?)-1769), Kantemir’s Russian poetic rival, mentioned Milton’s name for the first time in Cyrillic print in his poem “An Epistle from Russian Poetry to Apollo” (“Epistola ot rossiiskoi poezii k Appolonu”) in the company of Torquato Tasso (Boss “Milton’s Influence” 26). Trediakovskii’s poem was an integrated illustration of his new theory of poetics that cited Milton’s English *Paradise Lost* together with the Greek *Illiad*, the Latin *Aenied*, the French *Henriade*, and the Italian *Gerusalemme Liberata* as one of the best epic exemplars.

Even the poetry of imperial Russian *conservative* poets like M. M. Kheraskov and G. V. Derzhavin was affected by Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, particularly by his Satan. The 1789 French Revolution resulted in the political divide among tsarist Russian poets, where the Russian sympathizers of the French revolutionaries like A. N. Radishchev predictably viewed Satan as a Promethean hero, while the Russian conservatives sided with the portrayal of Satan as the Devil. For example, M. M. Kheraskov (1733-1807), in his poem “Vselennaia” (“Universe”), drew an unflattering parallel between Satan the Devil and Jacobinism. Likewise, G. V. Derzhavin (1743-1816) composed a poem on the French Revolution where he made Satan ultimately responsible for the political turmoil

and Jacobin contagion in France, through the gradual chain of events from his initial seduction of Adam and Eve in Eden (Boss “Milton’s Influence” 32-33).

However, Russian political writer A. N. Radishchev (1749-1802), in his 1790 censored book *Journey from Peterburg to Moscow*, listed Milton’s name among the writers who “will be read until the human race is exterminated” (162). Radishchev stood for the abolishment of both serfdom and censorship in tsarist Russia, and a close textual analysis of his comments against censorship in this book shows his intimate familiarity with Milton’s *Areopagitica*, which he must have read in English like later Decembrist sympathizers, because its first partial Russian translation did not appear in print until 1868. Radishchev almost paid with his life for his radical politics when he published the uncensored version of his book against censorship in 1790 in the midst of the French Revolution, still encouraged by his Queen’s earlier leniency towards free thought. Much earlier, Catherine II’s 1765 order, influenced by Montesquieu’s paradigms, acknowledged the advantages of free press, stating that words do not equate with action and punishments for essays can be dangerous because they result in ignorance, reluctance to write, as well as in the rejection of the gift of human Reason (quoted in Russian in Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). In 1783, Catherine the Great even signed the law about “free typographies” that guaranteed the right to open new presses without permission, as long as they notify the government’s office about their existence (Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). However, soon enough, Catherine II realized that the European Enlightenment’s ideology was “a fruit from a foreign tree” for Russia’s absolutism, and N. I. Novikov became the first victim of the Russian government’s increased vigilance against books that hide anti-government sentiments (Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). By

1790, the second year of the French Revolution, “there was created a new police position of the censor, and the first court hearing over a secular book took place—A. N. Radishchev’s *The Journey from Peterburg to Moscow*” (Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). Radishchev pointed out the “uselessness” of censorship and its harm to science (Antonova *Bor’ba za svobodu* 23). Catherine II felt that Radishchev’s book attempted to undermine royal authority in the eyes of his readers and was disrespectful towards the practiced censorship of books (Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). Having caught Radishchev in substituting the censored pages with the uncensored ones, the Court initially doomed the Russian writer to execution by quartering, but then replaced its verdict with a ten-year exile to Siberia (Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). It was tragic and even ironic that Novikov’s and Radishchev’s fates resulted from Catherine II’s shocking reaction that was so contrary to her earlier encouragement of free thought (Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). Besides Milton’s political thought, Radishchev also admired Milton’s “power of delineation” (*Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 2. Moskva-Leningrad: 1941. 115).

Although, in imperial Russia, Milton’s political radicalism clearly determined his varied appeal with the Russian critics, there formed one broad academic tradition of his reception by the second half of the nineteenth century. This tradition associated Milton’s epics with Christianity and established a trend in Russian society of reading them *en famille* together with the Bible. In fact, the prose Russian translation of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* began its circulation in imperial Russia even before the Bible, and thus sometimes became mistaken for it until the second half of the nineteenth century (Boss *Milton and the Rise of* 137). The academic tradition of Milton’s Russian reception began

with more conservative Russian critics like N. M. Karamzin and E. F. Timkovskii, who valued Milton's poetic talent and eloquence, but considered him too radical and extreme in his political views, especially due to his support of regicide. However, this critical tradition culminated with more liberal Russian critics like A. S. Pushkin and V. G. Belinskii, who admired Milton's political prose and association with Cromwell and sometimes even criticized him for not being sufficiently radical in his politics, especially in its poetical expression in his epics.

Famous Russian critic and editor N. M. Karamzin (1766-1826) also served as a loyal supporter of Russian Tsar Alexander I as his officially appointed Russian historiographer from 1803. As the 1802 editor of the widely popular Russian periodical *Vestnik Evropy* (*The Messenger of Europe*), Karamzin introduced Milton to his Russian readers as a sentimental young man, love-stricken with the idea of an unknown beautiful woman who left him her love note while he was asleep under the tree at Cambridge. After declaring that "Love more than anything affects the development of a genius: what poet has not felt its effect on his talent?" Karamzin shows how Milton became a poet from a romantic adventure while at Cambridge University, when a mysterious beautiful foreign lady left next to sleeping young Milton her penciled love note with Gvarini's Italian verse (Karamzin 312-313). According to Karamzin, since that fateful occasion, Milton kept searching for the foreign lady in England and Italy, meanwhile burning with imagination and inspired to compose poetry (313). Characterizing Milton as "England's Homer and Demosthenes" and his *Paradise Lost* as "one of the best works of the human mind," Karamzin attributes these accomplishments to the English poet's romantic incident with the mystery woman (313). Karamzin's 1802 editorial sketch of love-

stricken Milton certainly does not resemble the political Milton that Radishchev and later Decembrist sympathizers like Pushkin would admire. However, in his famous book *Letters of the Russian Traveler*, Karamzin indicates his preference of Milton's "profound" works to the "meaningless" writings of the "treacherous fanatic" Cromwell, which shows the Russian critic's keen awareness of Milton's political life (*Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika*. Leningrad. 1984. 348).

The famous Russian Romantic poet V. A. Zhukovskii (1789-1852), a poetic mentor of A. S. Pushkin and of the future novelist I. Turgenev, frequently mentioned Milton's *Paradise Lost* in his shorthand lists of foreign works to translate into Russian. In his personal library, Zhukovskii had three editions of Milton's *Paradise Lost* in English (1803), French (1836), and German (1793), which further indicated the seriousness of his ambition (Ianushkevich 483). Unfortunately, Zhukovskii only managed to translate the first 19 lines of Book 1 (transcribed in Ianushkevich 488). However, even in these few lines, it is obvious that Zhukovskii was trying to break with the long tradition of the Russian *prose* translations of Milton's long epic, by reflecting Milton's meter and blank verse in his own Russian rendition (Ianushkevich 490-91). Zhukovskii's attempt was part of the new poetic tradition in Russian translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* that commenced with P. Ia. Petrov from Moscow University in 1830 that preferred to reflect the rhythm of Milton's verse (Samarin "Tvorchestvo Milona v otsenke Belinskogo" 428 and n22). However, Zhukovskii also avoided the archaisms of some contemporary verse translations from the English original like those in M. Vronchenko's 1831 verse translation of the beginning of Milton's Book 1 (Ianushkevich 491).

Zhukovskii also mentioned Milton's long epic in his various hand-written notes, especially in the margins of his books, and even copied a couple of Western opinions on Milton's epic into his notebook in Russian translation (Ianushkevich 481-82). While Zhukovskii did not publish his own critical opinion on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, his 1805 handwritten commentary on it is quite illustrative about his notion of what a satisfactory epic should be. According to Zhukovskii, while Milton's character of Satan is impressive, he does not arouse the greatest interest in the reader—instead it is Adam and Eve who receive all of the reader's sympathy and love and thus are expected to triumph by the end of the epic (transcribed in Russian in Ianushkevich 483). Moreover, for Zhukovskii, the denouement of Milton's epic is unsatisfactory *because* the side that is repulsive to the reader triumphs, while the most interesting and thus more deserving side loses (transcribed in Russian in Ianushkevich 483). In fact, Zhukovskii insists that an epic poem should have a happy ending where the side most interesting to the reader is triumphant (transcribed in Russian in Ianushkevich 483). As a close friend of A. S. Pushkin, Zhukovskii was left to prepare for publication Pushkin's manuscript on Milton and Chateaubriand's 1836 French translation of *Paradise Lost* after Pushkin's death at the duel in 1837 (Ianushkevich 486). Pushkin's manuscript posthumously appeared in the famous Russian periodical *Sovremennik* (*The Contemporary*) he himself had recently founded and regularly contributed to until his untimely death. It is interesting to speculate if Zhukovskii's experience of editing the late Pushkin's manuscript on Milton in 1837 influenced his own opinion of Milton and *Paradise Lost*.

The Russian conservative critic E. F. Timkovskii (1790-1875?) was one of the first Russian authors to express his professional opinion on Milton and his long epic in

the widely circulated Russian periodical *Vestnik Evropy* (*The Messenger of Europe*) in 1810. Unlike Karamzin's earlier brief editorial note on Milton in the 1802 issue of this periodical, Timkovskii's two-part article on Milton straddles two separate volumes of the 1810 issues. Timkovsky first provides a short biography of Milton's life in his introduction and then evaluates *Paradise Lost* as an epic by comparing it to Homer's *Iliad* and Virgil's *Aeneid*, thereby showing how it supersedes them in certain aspects. Finally, he comments on the lamentable state of the Russian translations of *Paradise Lost* and offers his harsh criticism—the real inspiration behind his long article. In the biographical part of the article Timkovskii calls Milton “English Homer” (51), but does not approve of Milton's hatred of monarchy and considers the measures taken against Charles I extreme. In Timkovskii's article, there is an incorrect date given for Milton's birth—one century off (1708), but is apparently a misprint, for the rest of the dates are in the right century.

In his analysis of Milton's *Paradise Lost* as an epic, Timkovskii not only considers it as excellently unified but also in the wholeness of its main action (in Aristotelian terms) comparable if not superior to Homer's *Iliad* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. First of all, Milton's epic is greater in the universality of the theme which concerns the fate of the whole human race (58). Adam and Eve, being our predecessors and on whose acts our happiness depended, touch the hearts of their readers globally, unlike national heroes like Greek Achilles or Roman Aeneas (123). Secondly, among the abundance of personalities of Homer's epic, there is no character in the state of innocence and perfection as Milton's Adam and Eve (122). Thirdly, Milton's poetic achievement is even more impressive, because Milton had less freedom than Homer and Virgil in adding

his own inventions to scripture that in many cases lacks much detail (121). This disadvantage, however, does not handicap the expression of Milton's artistic creativity in his monumental epic, for Timkovskii holds that "everything that is great in nature has its place in this poem" (57). Finally and most importantly, in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, love is portrayed not as a weakness but as a sinless passion—Milton manages to show love "without a blanket," but without offending Reason (125). In spite of his high esteem for Milton's poetic talent, Timkovskii does not approve of Milton's hatred of monarchy and considers the measures taken against Charles I extreme (51).

Timkovskii strongly disapproves of the dishonest practice of those Russian anonymous translators who haphazardly translate Milton's *Paradise Lost* not from the English original, but from the French prose translations or even from the older Russian prose translations, all the while parading their translations as if they were made directly from Milton's English. Moreover, some of these Russian editions strive to appear as complete translations of *Paradise Lost*, but in reality are mere *adaptations* that combine some books from Milton's long epic with a few books from *Paradise Regained*. The 1810 edition published by "Platon Beketov's Typography" that Timkovskii is reviewing was apparently guilty of both of these practices: it not only merged the first three Books of Milton's *Paradise Lost* with a Book from *Paradise Regained*, passing off the latter as Book 4 of the long epic (131-32), but also ambitiously declared itself to be a new Russian translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* from the *English* original. Timkovskii takes pains to prove the contrary by quoting and comparing textual evidence from both Russian and French prose translations, and laments the resulting inaccuracies of such Russian translations that either inherit the errors of the French translations or introduce new



mistakes via literal Russian translation from the French (128). Such Russian translations-adaptations of Milton's epics are misleading and take monetary advantage of the uninitiated reader, who does not know better (130-31). Timkovskii particularly betrays disgust with those inadequate Russian translations that lack any scholarly value because they omit not only their Russian translators' name, but also their preface and explanatory notes or Milton's biography. Praising meticulous foreign editions of Milton's epics like the lavish French editions, Timkovskii contrasts and shames Russian editions as rushed, sloppy, and commercially-driven (125). While such Russian editions may work for the average reader's entertainment (130-31), for a true scholar, they are only useful as paper for cigars (125-26).

Unlike Timkovskii and Karamzin, A. S. Pushkin (1799-1837), arguably the most famous Russian poet of all time, admired Milton's political mission and devoted his attention primarily to Milton's political treatises like *Defensio populi* and *Iconoclastes*. A young Pushkin first alludes to Milton's poetry in his comic poem *Bova* (1814): "I [Pushkin] did not dare in nonsense poems/ to fry cherubims with cannons,/ live with Satan in Paradise..." Pushkin's somewhat ironic attitude towards Milton in this early poem drastically changes already in the 1820s, when he proudly declares in his 1825 article on Classical and Romantic poetry ("O poezii klassicheskoi i romanticheskoi"), that "England put forward with pride the names of Spencer, Milton, and Shakespeare against the names of Dante, Ariosto and Calderon." In a number of his critical articles on various topics, Pushkin starts characterizing Milton as a proud, strict, and indefatigable poet, who, like Dante, did not cater to the fashionable tastes of the crowd. Emphasizing the seriousness of Milton's works, Pushkin points out that neither Milton nor Dante wrote

“for the favorable smile of the fairer sex,” unlike the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French poets (*Sobranie sochinenii* 19). Continuing to admire Milton’s poetic courage in composition and in his choice of expressions, Pushkin champions Milton’s originality in his 1834 article, stating that “none of the French poets dared to be distinctly original like Milton, none of them renounced contemporary fame.”

In his last and most influential essay on the subject, titled “About Milton and Chateaubriand’s Translation of *Paradise Lost*,” Pushkin, who often alludes to Milton as the greatest poet of humanity, rails against the reactionary romantic image of Milton. He insists instead that Milton was a “political writer, known in Europe for his bitter and proud eloquence” (129), who “in days of evil, the victim of evil tongues, in poverty, prosecution, and blindness retained the inexorability of the soul and dictated *Paradise Lost*” (133-34). Pushkin criticizes the old tradition of the French translators of excluding or correcting passages from the translated original to please and not offend the taste of the French readers, assuming that they are doing a favor to the public and even to the author of the original. Moreover, Pushkin makes fun of the arrogance of the French who seem to feel superior to other nations (127-28). Chateaubriand, on the contrary, is the first French writer to translate Milton “word for word” as much as the French syntax allows it, thus demonstrating his humbleness and admiration before Milton’s talent in Pushkin’s eyes. Such translation, however, in spite of its noble intentions, has shortcomings, for, as with any literal translation, it distorts the true meaning and expression of the original. But the effort alone earns applause from Pushkin, and although Chateaubriand undertakes this difficult task to make his living in his old age, his choice of such an honest way of providing for himself instead of selling out to the riches

of the new government prove the integrity of this noble old man, the “teacher of all writing generations” (138). Pushkin expresses his outrage of the false portrayal of Milton’s personality in most of the French novels and tragedies, giving specific examples of such misrepresentation in Victor Hugo’s tragedy *Cromwell* and Albert de Vinie’s novel *St. Mars*, and juxtaposing them with the noble characterization of Milton by Walter Scott in his novel *Woodstock*. Pushkin asserts that French writers and translators are ready to sacrifice the true ideas of the foreign originals and the true personalities of the foreign authors just to entertain and please their public.

Soviet critic M. I. Gillel’son (1979) argues that Pushkin’s essay on Milton had not been fully completed in manuscript for publication, its composition being interrupted by his death in 1837, and thus the Soviet author offers some suggestions as to what particular ideas and topics would have been developed by Pushkin in the second part of his article. According to Gillel’son, it is actually Chateaubriand’s two-volume *Essai sur la littérature anglaise* (1836), submitted for publication together with his translation of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, that inspired Pushkin to compose his article “About Milton and Chateaubriand’s Translation of *Paradise Lost*.” Gillel’son also “solves” the mystery of Pushkin’s allusion to Milton as a “character” in Scott’s *Woodstock*: in reality, Milton is not an actual character in the novel, but his poetry is recited by one of the protagonists, causing passionate debates and anger in the royalist, who cannot believe that a republican author of *Defensio populi anglicani* can compose such great poetry. Other Soviet critics debate whether or not and to what degree Pushkin inherited or departed from the academic critical tradition of Milton’s imperial Russian reception established by N. M. Karamzin, A. Merzliakov, and I. Davydov. Again, ideological differences of the critics

shape their perception of Pushkin's role in Milton's Russian career. For example, Soviet academic ideologue R. M. Samarin seems to idolize political Pushkin, making him a pioneer who breaks not only with the conservative tradition in the tsarist Russian reception of Milton, but also with the literary criticism of the Western Miltonists in 1820s-30s. Instead, according to Samarin, Pushkin adopts another, more radical Russian tradition that begins with A. N. Radishchev and is enriched later by Decembrists like V. Kiukhel'beker ("Tvorchestvo Dzh. Mil'tona v otsenke Pushkina" 68-70). Writing in the late 1940s, in the midst of Stalinism and Soviet competition with the West on all ideological fronts, Samarin champions both A. S. Pushkin and V. G. Belinskii (in his 1949 article) as Russian critics who, while not even being Miltonists, had nevertheless greater critical foresight into Milton's works than their contemporary Western Miltonists. In contrast, another Soviet critic, M. G. Sokolianskii (1989), writing during Gorbachev's democratization efforts, strongly disagrees with R. M. Samarin's overt distinction between the two Russian critical traditions of Milton's literary reception. Believing Samarin's sharp division an unnecessary oversimplification, Sokolianskii provides names of pre-Pushkin Russian literary critics whose assessments of Milton were similarly positive, like those of A. N. Radishchev and A. Merzliakov. Likewise, Sokolianskii disagrees with Samarin's claim of Pushkin's originality as compared to Milton's European critical reception in the 1820s-30s, by listing the names of Pushkin's European contemporaries who expressed positive opinions of Milton as well, like the English poets Shelley, Coleridge, and Scott (139).

However, both Soviet critics would certainly agree on the nature of Milton's appeal to Pushkin and on Pushkin's important role in Milton's Russian fate. Milton's

faithfulness to his own principles appealed to Pushkin, the sympathizer of the Russian Decembrist movement, a censored writer, who, like Milton, was not spared by the “evil tongues” of an “evil time” (Samarin “Tvorchestvo Dzh. Mil’tona v otsenke Pushkina” 70). The importance of Pushkin’s views on Milton in the context of Russian literature and literary-critical thought is hard to overestimate: “Pushkin absorbed and synthesized all the best that had been obtained by the Miltonists before him” and “brings Milton to life for Russia, making his works relevant to the Russian literary reality;” whereas in pre-Pushkin Russian literary criticism, Milton’s figure and his works existed as “mere facts of the history of literature and of the literary past” (Sokolianskii 139).

Pushkin’s favorite ruler, the liberal Alexander I, favored free press and placed legal constraints on pre-publication censorship in 1804, allowing it to block publication of manuscripts only if they did not support “true enlightenment of minds and education of manners,” and when a passage in doubt had a double meaning, the censor was instructed to interpret it in the best favorable light for its author rather than prosecute him (Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). Unfortunately, such an image of an enlightened censor remained the dream of Alexander I and his famous fan, A. S. Pushkin, because the fate of Russian literature turned out to be in the hands of ignorant and cowardly censors (Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). Although Pushkin fantasized about an enlightened censor, who was fair and independent, and not cowardly before the wealthy nobility, he had to admit in 1822 that a realistic, everyday censor was no more than a coward and a fool, and thus like Russian Decembrists, Pushkin hoped to abolish censorship (Antonova *Bor’ba za svobodu* 23). Nicholas I’s autocratic policies turned the wheel backwards, away from the Western progress and “away from Milton,” by establishing strict

boundaries for literature and journalism, as well as by monopolizing any discussion of contemporary politics (Antonova “Dukh Mil’tona” 77). In fact, the fate of Milton’s epics under Nicholas I can be vividly illustrated by the 9 April-27 October 1853 censorship report on Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* (Boss *Milton and the Rise of* 239).

Pushkin’s posthumously influential evaluation of Milton’s character segues into another impactful assessment of Milton’s poetic talent by the Russian critic V. G. Belinskii (1811-1870), who famously characterizes Milton’s *Paradise Lost* as “an apotheosis of uprising against authority” in his 1848 article (*Izbrannye filosofskie sochineniia* 401). In fact, Belinskii’s catchy label would still remain alive, quoted even in the book chapter titles of the Soviet Miltonists like R. M. Samarin (1964) and A. A. Chameev (1986) over a century later. However, not many Soviet critics stress the ending of Belinskii’s phrasing that has a Blakean tail (i.e. “without knowing it”)—“though [Milton] thought to do something completely different”—as well as the immediately following sentence that further contextualizes it: “So strong is the influence of historical movement of society on poetry” (*Izbrannye filosofskie sochineniia* 401). In Belinskii’s illustration of the impact of historical circumstances on art, Milton is mentioned right after Shakespeare, where the two English poets are juxtaposed: “Shakespeare was the poet of the old, merry England that just in a few years suddenly became severe, strict, and fanatical,” which marked his last works with “gloomy sadness,” especially due to the “strong impact of the Puritan movement” (*Izbrannye filosofskie sochineniia* 401). Had Shakespeare been born a couple of decades later, “the nature of his works would have been different,” even though his genius would have stayed the same (*Izbrannye*

*filosofskie sochineniia* 401). Likewise, “Milton’s poetry is surely the product of his epoch,” which implies that Shakespeare and Milton were the English poets of two very different historical epochs (*Izbrannye filosofskie sochineniia* 401).

Also, Belinskii’s opinion of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* is not always considered in the wider context of his thoughts on the epic genre in general. Since Belinskii does not devote an essay to Milton, his comments on the English poet and his poetic achievement are sprinkled throughout his several articles and should be considered together for a more comprehensive picture of his ideas on Milton. In his critical essays, Belinskii frequently stresses the importance of correlation, of “harmony” between life and art, what he calls “the poetical truth.” Belinskii insists that Latin and French classical literature emerges not from life, but as a consequence of imitation of truly noble Greek poetry, and therefore it possesses not natural, but feigned grandeur:

Homer’s *Iliad* was created by the people, and it reflects the life of the Hellines; it was a sacred book for them and a source of religion and morality, and that is why *Iliad* is immortal. But tell me, for God’s sake, what are these *Aeneids*, these *Liberated Jerusalems*, *Paradises Lost*, and *Messias*? Aren’t they the essence of fallacy of the talents, more or less mighty, efforts of the mind more or less successful to mislead its admirers? Don’t they resemble the old servants who are honored not for their achievements but for the sake of their old age? Don’t they belong to those kind of prejudices, created by imagination, which people respect when they believe in them, and which they spare when they no longer believe in them; spare them either due to their antiquity, or out of habit, or

because of laziness and lack of free time to examine them completely and turn them into ashes?... (*Sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 1. 106)

Belinskii exposes the artificiality of the European epic from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, which results from the epic poets' false methods—their unsuccessful attempts to reconcile the outdated form with their new historical experience. For Belinskii, the true epic of the new European society was the novel (genetically related to the epic), and Swift—the founder of the genuine eighteenth-century novel (*Sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 1. 107).

Although Belinskii only considers Greek epics truly original, he concedes that Tasso's Italian epic *Gerusalemme Liberata*, Milton's English *Paradise Lost*, and Klopstock's German *Messias* represent the best efforts in the epic genre among the new nations (*Sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 2. 34). These epics are “abundant in excellent poetical particulars and show the great poetical abilities of their creators, but their effort to give them a form alien to their content and to the spirit of their time, to make them *Iliads* at any cost, naturally distorted and disfigured them in general” (34). In fact, according to Belinskii, these epics could not have been “well-balanced artistic creations due to the fact that they originated not from a spontaneous act of art, but from the conscious and, moreover, erroneous thought” (34). Belinskii admits that Milton's *Paradise Lost* is “a work of a great talent,” but he also points out that “such a poem might have been written only by a Jew of biblical times and not by a Puritan of Cromwell's epoch, when there had already entered into a belief an element of free thinking (still purely rational)” (35). Therefore, the form of Milton's poem is “not natural, and in addition to its numerous wonderful parts that reveal gigantic imagination, it contains a multitude of ugly



particulars. The latter include the “wrestling of angels with the fallen angels using earthly weapons,” the “wounds that they inflict on their ethereal bodies and that heal within a time period that ranges from an hour to a whole day depending on the strength of the blow,” and the “cannons that angels obtain from the mountains by night to fire with them the evil spirits” (35).

Discussing the role of society and its attitude in a poet’s life in another essay, Belinskii recalls Milton’s poetic fate after observing that “a poet died, dies, and will continue to die from hunger in his society” (*Sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 1. 256). Milton’s society valued the poet rather lowly, but the same society a century later extolled him: “If Milton is indeed a great poet, then society did not appreciate him because it was not able to do it due to its lack of education” (*Sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 1. 403). Finally, in his essay on Pushkin, Belinskii mentions Milton’s name among the “Parnassian arbiters, great foreign and Russian poets” (*Sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 3. 425) and approves of Pushkin’s passionate defense of Milton against the French authors’ false portrayal of the English poet (*Sobranie sochinenii*. Vol. 3. 639). Thus, Belinskii’s positive evaluation of Milton seems to draw inspiration from Pushkin’s admiration of the English poet; however, Belinskii’s Marxist outlook also recognized the negative influence of Milton’s Puritan beliefs on his art. While approving of Milton the man as a revolutionary, Belinskii did not lose sight of the fact that the English Revolution was Puritan and thus religious in nature.

Making a case for “the leading role of the Russian revolutionary-democratic thought in the literary studies in the nineteenth century,” Soviet critic Samarin goes as far as to claim that Belinskii was the first critic to solve the mystery of Milton’s Satan, by

pointing out the poem's contradictions coexisting in almost dialectical unity ("Tvorchestvo Dzh. Mil'tona v otsenke V. G. Belinskogo" 428-31). Moreover, Samarin emphasizes that Belinskii's "materialist" critical method of the "revolutionary democrat" enabled him to place Milton in the concrete historical framework and in the "general historic-literary process," while Western Miltonists had failed to do so, either by considering Milton only within the "poetics of genre" like Addison, Voltaire, and Bodmer, or "isolated as a great individual" like Coleridge, Chateaubriand, Hazlitt, and Macaulay ("Tvorchestvo Dzh. Mil'tona v otsenke V. G. Belinskogo" 430).

Timkovskii's 1810 diatribe in the widely-read Russian periodical *Vestnik Evropy* (*The Messenger of Europe*) against the low-quality Russian translations and unscholarly editions of Milton's epics is voiced once again by another famous Russian critic half a century later in 1859. In his review, published in another popular Russian periodical *Sovremennik* (*The Contemporary*), N. A. Dobroliubov (1836-1861) severely criticizes the poor quality and presumptuous deception of Elizaveta Zhadovskaia's 1859 Russian *verse* translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* from the older Russian prose translation.

Dobroliubov was appalled by Zhadovskaia's very selective sampling of *Paradise Lost* (parts of Books 4, 8, 9) and by her conflating part of another Book from *Paradise Lost* with a single Book from *Paradise Regained*, when all the while her ambitious book title was deliberately presenting these excerpts as a full Russian *verse* translation of both epics in only 140 pages and with a steep price of 1 ruble and 65 kopeks (207). Like Timkovskii earlier, Dobroliubov suspects the commercial drive of the translator behind such misleading translations-adaptations and questions the true motive behind her "peacock-like" showy performance without real substance (208). Dobroliubov stresses

the usefulness of quality Russian translations of the masterpieces of foreign poetry like Milton's *Paradise Lost*, but Zhadovskaia's poetic effort does not meet his standard and fails to substantiate even her own daring claim of a *complete* translation of both English epics (208).

On the heels of Dobroliubov's 1859 negative review of Zhadovskaia's Russian poetic translation-adaptation of Milton's epics, there followed complete Russian *prose* translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* by Professor A. Z. Zinov'ev of Moscow University (young Lermontov's tutor) in 1861, as well as the *first* Russian translation of Milton's *Moscovia* by E. P. Karnovich in 1860, evidently inspired by M. P. Poludenskii's detailed description of it with long excerpts earlier that year. Zinov'ev's academic Russian prose translations of Milton's epics are still valued for their accurate line-by-line correspondence, and his scholarly notes to *Paradise Regained* are still being used by modern Russian translators like A. Aleksandrovskii in 2000. Poludenskii's exposition and criticism of Milton's *Moscovia* in the Russian periodical *Russkii vestnik* (1860) represented the first instance of Russian reception of Milton's narrative about Russia, prompting Karnovich's Russian translation and praise of *Moscovia* in the Russian periodical *Otechestvennye zapiski* (1860).

It is curious that first Russian translations of Milton's prose works like *Moscovia* (1860) and later *Areopagitica* (1868) begin in widely-read Russian periodicals. Russian authors' long fight against Russian censorship also starts in the 1860s, so Russian translations and periodical publications of Milton's *Moscovia* and *Areopagitica* during that period most likely have a political motivation. If *Areopagitica*'s manifesto against pre-publication censorship particularly came handy to progressive Russian writers like A.

I. Gertsen (Herzen), N. G. Chernyshevskii, and M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, *Moscovia* with its revelation of Russia's backward culture also served well as a political satire, especially since both of Milton's works provided a safe cover of a foreign writer's perspective to the Russian translators and publishers. For example, in 1868, Russian editor N. L. Tiblen translates parts of Milton's *Areopagitica* into Russian (in full only in 1907) and publishes them in his periodical *Sovremennoe obozrenie* (*Contemporary Survey*). Tiblen provides a very telling editorial footnote to his publication: "The appearance of Milton's article on the pages of a modern-day periodical may seem somewhat strange; however, its subject belongs to such [topics] about which [the editor of] *Contemporary Survey*, believes that, for many reasons, it is much better to speak with the mouths of the classical and foreign writers rather than with those of [our Russian] native writers" (n\*). Tiblen's cautious explanation may further illustrate just how repressive Russian censorship still was at the time that a topic of free press could only appear in Russian print in the words of "classical and foreign" authors like those of seventeenth-century John Milton in *Areopagitica*. Likewise, Iu. V. Tolstoi's Russian translation and copious annotation of Milton's *Moscovia* did not appear in print for another thirteen years because of such dire political atmosphere in Russia, according to American scholar John B. Gleason, who cites as his evidence the earlier suspension of the Russian publication *Chteniia* in 1848, where Tolstoi's scholarly edition of *Moscovia* was finally featured in 1874.

M. P. Poludenskii's first introduction of Milton's *Moscovia* to his Russian readers in 1860 was published as "Milton's History of Russia" in the Russian "literary and political" periodical *Russkii vestnik* (*Russian Messenger*). As a unique Russian owner of the 1682 English edition of Milton's *Moscovia* that "has become a bibliographic rarity"

(533), Poludenskii shares detailed excerpts from it apparently in his own Russian translation. Poludenskii believes that Milton had composed *Moscovia* in his own hand shortly before he became blind, but gave it to the publisher on his deathbed (533). According to Poludenskii, although Milton never visited Russia, his composition has value because of the sources that he utilized, since in his possession he had many narrations about Russia that have not been published yet (533). Beyond that fact, Poludenskii does not praise *Moscovia* and seems to offer large portions of Milton's original in his Russian translation more as a historical and literary curiosity for his Russian compatriots. Although Poludenskii's publication consists mainly of quoted material from Milton's *Moscovia* in his own translation, he also describes the structure of Milton's work, attributes its information to Milton's specific sources, and drops his own brief, but critical comments along the way. For example, Poludenskii remarks that Milton's information about the "infertility" of the Russian land and its cold weather in the North is exaggerated, "as it is in most of the foreign stories about our climate" (534). Likewise, Poludenskii states that Russian people's names in Milton's composition "are so distorted that it is quite difficult to guess many of them" (534). Moreover, Poludenskii himself admits that most of the information at the end of the first chapter of Milton's *Moscovia* that relates about Russian "rulers, income, army, religion, marriages, burials, traditions, habits, transport, and animals" is "incorrect" and some of it is "completely nonsensical" (535). Hence, Poludenskii's generous quotation from this first chapter of Milton's *Moscovia* should not be construed as a compliment, but rather as a critique, since Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of *Moscovia* are hardly mentioned by Poludenskii beyond his Russian translation of their title and brief summary of their historical content. By

publishing his Russian translation of parts of Milton's *Moscovia* in the widely-circulated Russian "literary and political" periodical (as its subtitle claims), Poludenskii might have had a political agenda, safely covered as a foreign literary curiosity from the seventeenth-century historical author. In fact, Poludenskii devotes most of his energy as a translator to Chapter 5 of Milton's *Moscovia*, which he finds "most curious" and quotes for seven pages straight, as it narrates the 1553 discovery of northeastern Russia by English embassies and Anglo-Russian relations from then until 1604 (537). After reprinting Milton's list of sources, Poludenskii ends his overview of Milton's *Moscovia* on the thought that its main source is "Hackluit's collection of the travels" (i.e. Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations*), "from which Milton derived most of his geographical and historical information and compiled a chronological list of facts, meanwhile omitting many of the curious details from his mentioned sources" (545).

Following Poludenskii's expository essay on Milton's *Moscovia* in the widely-read periodical *Russian Messenger* in 1860, E. P. Karnovich published the first Russian translation of Milton's compilation in another popular Russian periodical *Otechestvennye Zapiski* (*Native Notes*) later that year. Finding it unnecessary to relate Milton's famous life in detail in his prefatory article titled "Milton's Composition about Russia," Karnovich laments that in Milton's biographies that include the list of his works, there is no mention of his composition about Russia, as if it was later forgotten, becoming a "bibliographic rarity" already by Karnovich's own time (101). However, in its time, Karnovich objects, Milton's *Moscovia*, "without a doubt, had great importance" since it came out in two different editions within a short span of twelve years: in the 1682 London edition and in the 1694 Amsterdam edition (101). Since the English and the

Dutch were rivals in trade and seafaring at the time, Milton's *Moscovia*, as the "composition concerning the geography of the East," was particularly useful to both of these competing nations (Karnovich 102). Moreover, Milton's *Moscovia* clearly reflects "the spirit of English trading industry because more detailed stories are mainly concerned with the trade and the role of the English merchants in Russia," which is hardly surprising since Milton's sources were composed by those who served as trading rather than diplomatic agents on the English side (Karnovich 103). As Karnovich puts it, "For the English of that time as it is still for our English contemporaries, the politics was the trade and the trade was the politics" (103). In fact, Karnovich insists that the purpose of Milton's *Moscovia* was "not only to familiarize the English with the history and contemporary life of Moscovia, but also to show England's trading relationship with Moscovia, as well as to report to the English on the Russians' geographical discoveries around that time in the far northeastern region of Asia, still completely unknown to Western Europe" (102). As a collection of geographical information "gathered by the Russians about an area of Asia belonging to China," Milton's *Moscovia* "had importance for the industrial English and the industrial Dutch, who aspired to establish their markets and factories in the little-known countries still unvisited by the Europeans" (Karnovich 102).

Karnovich also argues that Milton's *Moscovia* had "a special meaning" for the English, because "it presented a comprehensive collection of all the wonderful facts about Russia existent in English literature at the time" since "Milton used decidedly everything that was written about Russia by his compatriots in that period" (102). Therefore, Milton's *Moscovia* represented "the research result of nearly one hundred

continuous years of Russia's relations with England, both diplomatic and trading" (Karnovich 102). Moreover, as a comprehensive survey of Russia based on the sources that existed in the English literature in his time, Milton's *Moscovia* presents a valuable compendium of English beliefs about Russia in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, serving as a report of English observations about the inner workings and daily life of Russia in that period (Karnovich 103). Karnovich even concludes that being an "antique foreign source on Russian history," Milton's *Moscovia* is also "important for us as a comprehensive and conscientiously compiled collection from English sources about the former state of our motherland" (102). In fact, in a patriotic sentiment, Karnovich manages to encapsulate the Russian contribution to European geographical literature through Milton's *Moscovia*. Since the English agents at the Russian Court aspired to collect information about those countries that Russians had already infiltrated, but which Western Europeans had not set foot in yet, Milton's *Moscovia* also reveals that "all of the information about the area of Central Asia, bordering with China, the English received from the Russians" (Karnovich 103). Consequently, by collecting such information in his *Moscovia*, "Milton, with Russian assistance, acquainted Western Europe with the Far East," and thus the Russians at the end of the seventeenth century served as the "main catalysts of geographical knowledge about the north-eastern parts of Asia to the Europeans," which was a rather significant contribution on their part (Karnovich 103).

Despite his clear appreciation for Milton's *Moscovia*, Karnovich offers his sober criticism of it as well, noting that Milton used his nineteen English sources about Russia "without any criticism" or verification, by "selecting such facts that would be most impressive to the English about our predecessors' daily life" (102). In addition,



Karnovich is fully aware of the major handicap of Milton's *Moscovia* as a work composed by an author who had never been to Russia and thus compiled only on the testimony of others, which precludes the appearance of any information not already found in an English source about Russia published by 1652 (Milton's total blindness) (102). Since Milton's *Moscovia* made its appearance to the Russian reader only in 1860, some of its factual novelty had been lost to more recent historical works. For example, according to Karnovich, Russian historiographer N. M. Karamzin in his *History of the Russian State* used most of the same English sources that Milton had cited in his *Moscovia* and thus, almost all of the facts that Milton had mentioned also appeared in Karamzin's national history, which however does not detract from the "entertaining value" of Milton's composition (102). Having listed Milton's nineteen acknowledged sources for *Moscovia*, Karnovich concludes that it is nearly impossible to determine to what degree Milton took liberty with his sources and what he borrowed from them in its entirety or what he altered through his own abbreviation or addition (103).

Self-admittedly intrigued by Poludenskii's 1860 essay on Milton's *Moscovia*, but apparently unaware of E. P. Karnovich's 1860 Russian translation, Iurii Tolstoi immediately obtained Milton's original and started composing his own translation of *Moscovia*, as well as attaching a critical note on Poludenskii's article upon its final publication in Moscow University's *Chteniia (Readings at the Imperial Society of Russian History and Antiquities)* in 1874. It is not clear why Tolstoi's Russian translation of Milton's *Moscovia* did not appear in print for over a decade, but the repressive political situation in Russia in the 1860s is the most probable explanation, although Tolstoi himself is silent on that score in the first 1874 publication in *Chteniia*.

Only later, in his brief prefatory “Explanation” to the 1875 reprint of his Russian translation of Milton’s *Moscovia*, does Tolstoi attribute this initial publication delay to his being distracted with other matters from completing the notes to his 1861 manuscript translation.

Undoubtedly, Tolstoi was a respected scholar on Russian history, particularly on Anglo-Russian relations since the sixteenth century, and even spent two years on site in England (1858-1859) doing research on books and manuscripts on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Russian history in the British and London museums, libraries, and archives. According to Tolstoi’s “Explanation,” upon his return from his research trip to England, he was shocked by Poludenskii’s essay, particularly by his arbitrary choice of Milton’s *Moscovia* “among the cornucopia of interesting and wonderful English monuments on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Anglo-Russian relations” (1). Tolstoi was prompted to respond critically to Poludenskii’s article based solely on the latter’s translated excerpts, but then he himself obtained Milton’s *Moscovia* in its English original to verify its poor historical value. Having confirmed its historical deficiency with his own eyes, Tolstoi nevertheless decided to invest his time and energy into translating *Moscovia* himself in 1861. Upon his first encounter with Milton’s *Moscovia*, Tolstoi dismissed it as one of those compilations that “not only did not offer any new information, but frequently transmitted even the old facts inaccurately and in a distorted fashion” (1-2). Tolstoi’s closer look at Milton’s *Moscovia* in Poludenskii’s detailed excerpts not only confirmed his first impression, but he subsequently labeled it as a compilation that “selected its information extremely unconscientiously, and was on Milton’s part no more than a speculation on the taste of his contemporary readers, always

curious about anything related to remote ‘Moscovia’ and to even more remote ‘Cathay’”

(2). To prove his low evaluation of the historical merit of Milton’s *Moscovia* and its unimportant status for Russian history, Tolstoi set out to compare Milton’s compiled information as it appears in Poludenskii’s Russian translation with its 19 original sources that the former conveniently lists at the end of his tract and Poludenskii reprints without change or translation. Tolstoi points out that 11 of Milton’s sources came from the first volume of Haklyt’s *Collection of the early voyages* (1589), while the other 8 appeared in the second and third volumes of *Purchas his Pilgrims* (1625-26) (2). Unlike Karnovich, the previous Russian translator of Milton’s *Moscovia*, who lamented the fact that it would be impossible to trace and single out Milton’s creative effort from his sources (103), Tolstoi painstakingly tracks Milton’s facts back to their original sources throughout his 1861 note and later translation.

Tolstoi mostly accuses Milton in transmitting outdated information about Russia because of his reliance on outdated sources. For example, the facts gathered from Richard Chancelour’s visit to Russia in 1553 were already dated by 1588, and Tolstoi holds Milton accountable for repeating the old facts about Russia instead of relying on his more recent source in Giles Fletcher’s *Of the Russe Common Wealth* for more accurate information (5-6). However, even Fletcher’s work was outdated on some information by Milton’s time, such as the commissions of the Russian army and their respective incomes (Tolstoi 7). Tolstoi’s main diatribe against Milton is that he repeated mistakes from Haklyt’s papers, such as the foundation of Russia in 573: Tolstoi can forgive Haklyt’s ignorance of the calendar, but not Milton’s, because Haklyt was an “editor of original documents,” but Milton was a “historian of Russia” and should have employed the main

asset of a good historian—his “historical criticism” (11). According to Tolstoi’s rebuke, Milton “did not study the subject about which he wrote, did not take advantage of the curious and abundant materials in his possession, did not subject his sources to historical criticism, and completely overlooked that they belonged to different epochs” (11-12). In addition, Tolstoi holds against Milton that he sometimes mentions more ordinary events, such as Anthony Jenkinson’s visit to Moscow in 1561, while omitting more important occasions, such as Jenkinson’s travel to Bukhara in 1558 and the expansion of the English to Persia through Russia in 1563 and later, as well as some significant details surrounding Jenkinson’s last two visits to Russia in 1566 and 1571 (21-23). Tolstoi qualifies his criticism of Milton stating that it is based solely on Poludenskii’s Russian translation of parts of *Moscovia*, which he must trust to have been done accurately, because Milton’s English requires the knowledge of the seventeenth-century English rather than the English of Tolstoi’s and Poludenskii’s English contemporaries (12). Tolstoi also holds Poludenskii responsible for some obvious translating errors that made Milton’s work even more flawed (12-16).

Finally, Tolstoi mentions that Milton’s *Moscovia* was not honored with a second separate edition, which further indicates to him that it found a subdued reception by the English and explains why it has become a bibliographic rarity and a “deservedly forgotten book” (24). However, Poludenskii’s literary resurrection of Milton’s *Moscovia* in Russian press and his endowing it with a new meaning that it never had for Russian history, prompted Tolstoi to expose its historical handicap. Thus, Tolstoi concludes his essay on a Miltonic moralistic note: “In historical materials, one has to be particularly vigilant: poor, inaccurate material is not useful for the lover of History, because in order

to confirm its inaccuracy, one has to spend a lot of time comparing it with the accurate sources” (24). Using Milton’s own words in *Paradise Lost*—“if what is evil/Be real, why not known, since easier shunn’d?”—Tolstoi declares that “inaccurate historical material in History is evil, and its exposure is the duty of anyone who is familiar with the original sources” (24). While Tolstoi’s scholarly sincerity in exposing inaccurate historical information is undeniable and commendable, it should not be overlooked that Tolstoi was also a statesman and worked in various ministries for the Russian government. In fact, because of his recognized expertise in Russian history, Tolstoi even served as an adviser to the Holy Synod in 1866, so his political affiliation with the Russian state control agencies must have influenced his reception of any anti-Russian literature, which Milton’s *Moscovia* can be interpreted to be. Tolstoi was probably expected to find faults in any unflattering portrayals of his country and government by foreign historians, which would also explain the very ardent and even moralistic nature of his rebuttal of Milton’s *Moscovia*. It is also worth noting that in 1848, after printing the Russian translation of Giles Fletcher’s *Of the Russe Common Wealth*, Moscow University’s *Chteniia* was suspended by the Russian government, and its publisher O. M. Bodianskii fired from the university for such an “unpatriotic” offense. While Tolstoi is completely silent on this score in his essay or footnotes, his still unrepentant editor of *Chteniia* Bodianskii added a curiously telling editorial note next to Tolstoi’s original bibliographic footnote on Fletcher’s work: “This composition has been long printed in the Russian translation for *Chteniia* [...], but is now rotting in its book archives, because apparently, it is still a mirror for us even now, and we do not much like to look at it” (6n14). As Bodianskii’s

bitter comment and personal experience reveal, even 26 years later, the first Russian translation of Fletcher's openly negative portrayal of Russia was still under wraps.

In their effort to save Milton's Russian reputation from Iurii Tolstoi's 1874 devastating criticism and seemingly definitive statement on his *Moscovia*, three laudatory biographies of Milton's life by A. Shul'govskaia (1878), E. Solov'ev (1894), and I. Ivanov (1896) followed and praised the political Milton and his revolutionary prose. Probably also inspired by the 1860 Russian translation of Thomas Macaulay's biographical essay on Milton and encouraged by the 1861 Russian abolition of serfdom, these three biographers with their flattering accounts cemented Milton's favorable reception in the last forty years of imperial Russia and beyond. In fact, building on Pushkin's and Belinskii's earlier important evaluations of Milton, these three Russian biographies became so influential in their turn in Russian literary criticism that they helped shape the Soviet image of a revolutionary Milton like the Satan of his *Paradise Lost*. Although first Russian translators of Milton's epics like Archbishop Amvrosii and Baron Stroganov, often provided a brief biographical note on Milton usually based on Elijah Fenton's *Life*, Solov'ev's and Ivanov's biographical accounts of Milton's life were the first detailed, stand-alone biographies.

In her biographical abstract that serves as an introduction to her translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* in 1878, A. Shul'govskaia demonstrates her deep respect towards Milton's genius, which reveals itself even in his first poetical experiments at the age of 15 (x). In fact, Shul'govskaia declares that Milton's "L' Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" hold first place in the English idyllic poetry, and if Milton had not written anything else, these works would have been sufficient enough to

place him “in the same echelon with the first-rate English poets” (x). The biographer does not place much value on Milton’s *Of Education*, however, giving the importance to another work of the same period—*Areopagitica*, a prose work “most powerful in its eloquence and in its invincible logic” (xii-xiii). Milton’s *History of Britain* does not find much favor with Shul’govskaia who finds it interesting only because it came from Milton’s pen, but otherwise, does not see in it “a great importance” (xiii). The biographer thinks that Cromwell, who had such a skill in choosing the right people for himself, took advantage of Milton’s talents and in certain instances “used Milton’s blindness as a political trick” (xiii). Shul’govskaia considers Milton’s “independence and fearlessness” as his most “characteristic” features that revealed themselves even in the most extreme situations. For example, when Milton was imprisoned after the Restoration of monarchy, he bailed himself out, but not without negotiating and reducing the ransom (xv).

Although Shul’govskaia prefers Milton’s *Paradise Lost* over *Paradise Regained*, a poem “long forgotten and weaker than the first,” she nevertheless recognizes some of its achievements and treats it as a part that finishes and constitutes a whole with *Paradise Lost* (xv). Unlike other biographers of Milton, Shul’govskaia claims not to judge Milton for subduing his poetical talent for 20 years during political strife, for Milton’s patriotic achievements were not less great, and his political treatises, whatever their weaknesses might be, generated considerable social freedom (xviii). Shul’govskaia also believes that Milton was not such a relentless republican as he has been often portrayed, but views him as a person who believed that power should belong in the hands of the most wise and honest people (xviii), but who was not against any particular form of government (xiii). In fact, she believes that Milton did not concern himself too much with the form of

government such power should take—this was for him a question of “secondary” importance, and only as “a means for the achievement of his goal” (xviii). Shul’govskaia stresses that Milton was not against any particular form of government, be it monarchy or oligarchy (xiii), but he was “against any kind of abuse of power, no matter from what source it originated,” and therefore, all his life, he was an “indefatigable fighter for freedom of conscience and human rights” (xviii).

Evgenii Solov’ev’s detailed account of Milton’s life published in 1894—*Milton. His Life and Literary Work. A Biographical Essay*—is still considered the most authoritative biographical study of the English poet from the pre-Soviet period. It should be noted that a Russian translation of Thomas Macaulay’s biographical essay on Milton appears in 1860, and Solov’ev lists it among the sources he has consulted prior to writing his own work. Solov’ev’s well-informed biographical work becomes popular, is widely read, and highly influential before and after the October Revolution of 1917. For the first time in Russian literary criticism, Solov’ev rehabilitates Cromwell, and thus, by association, Milton’s political image, identifying them with Satan in the opening books of *Paradise Lost* and with Aeschylus’ Prometheus. It is a compliment on Solov’ev’s part, for he considers Satan’s portrayal Milton’s most successful characterization: Satan “astonishes [the reader] with his immensity, an immensity of [his] body and passions, with his pride, for which freedom is everything. But there is no baseness in him that would call for [the reader’s] repugnance” (62). Moreover, Solov’ev believes that *Paradise Lost* sums up Milton’s life experience, especially for the years 1641-1661 (58-59). If there had not been these twenty “tempestuous” years, he contends, there would not be *Paradise Lost*. Therefore, one should not regret the time Milton spends on writing



his political pamphlets, as opposed to poems, for Milton's life becomes "a more grandiose poem yet," being sacrificed for the common good: "Does it not make it a poem to lose one's health, estate, eyesight and finally [to be able] to exclaim proudly and valiantly: 'I am happy, for everything I have lost, I lost in the struggle for the right cause'" (43). Solov'ev highly admires Milton's priorities, particularly his choice to devote himself to civic duty during the Civil Wars. Only later would Milton turn to his poetic ambition and become "England's Dante and Tasso."

In his long essay *Conscience in the History of One Life* (1896), full of philosophical insights and poetical language, I. Ivanov attempts to shed light on Milton's "truly heroic expression of conscience" (85) that has not been fully appreciated by critics. In Ivanov's opinion, to understand the real historical personality of Milton one needs to read his poem in search of another, "non-poetical" Milton—"one of the most energetic champions of social thought and life that the classical motherland of such leaders knows" (35). In fact, Milton provides a "chronicle of his epoch and a dramatic chorus of history" (29). For Ivanov, to separate the story of Milton's soul from his literary work is "to remove the sun from the sky and turn a wonderful landscape into a kingdom of silence and death" (46).

Ivanov holds that "No other West European poetical work has been translated and reprinted so many times in Russia and obtained such irreconcilable rights for authority as Milton's *Paradise Lost*" (34). Milton's story of Eve, Satan, and Adam can be recognized as "an exemplary romantic story, an immortal love drama that anticipates all themes in this field" (60). Ivanov emphasizes the timelessness and universality of Eve's desires and demonic temptation, the repetitions of the fall throughout history, and Milton's influence

on all future temptation figures—Lord Byron’s Childe Harold, Pushkin’s Onegin, Lermontov’s Pechorin, to name a few. According to Ivanov, a result of Milton’s disappointment with women is his expertise on women’s psychology: Milton is “such a delicate observer of woman’s nature that later special singers of love, disappointments and temptations can name themselves with honor only the pupils of our poet” (53-54). In fact, Ivanov believes that Milton may be the only “philosopher of a woman’s heart” among all the poets of Europe (60).

Ivanov’s praise of Milton does not stop there: Milton is also “the most lawful predecessor of all social philosophy of the eighteenth century” and his political treatises are “the most complete encyclopedia of political ideas of the new time” (69). In Ivanov’s view, Milton’s idea of a “natural man” is “immeasurably loftier and more versatile” than that of Rousseau (73). Rousseau holds that man is an ideal natural being; for Milton, nature itself is perfect. Therefore, Milton identifies Nature with Reason and puts his idea into the words of God the Father in *Paradise Lost* (73). Ivanov favors Milton’s philosophical stand over that of the French philosophers because he sees no contradictions in the English poet’s theory: “slavery is the fruit of distorted Nature, an abuse of moral freedom” (74). Unlike Rousseau, who betrays his earlier views to solve the question of the necessity of society, and Montesquieu, who leaves unresolved the irreconcilable contradictions in his essay, *Spirit of Law*, Milton connects the notion of free will and Nature. In addition, Ivanov proudly recognizes Milton as the first Englishman “to establish the theory of two powers—legislative and executive,” giving judicial power to the legislative branch (77).

This critic's appreciation of Milton comes to its peak in his portrayal of the English poet as a man, whose boundless faith in the rightness of his ideals prevails over his poetic aspirations, and makes him the spokesman for moral conscience. Ivanov painstakingly points out that Milton could have chosen inaction and remained an indifferent onlooker during the political turmoil in his country, calmly proceeding with the plan of his youth for his artistic productivity. Instead Milton preferred "the depths of one of the cruelest conflicts that the new history of Europe has witnessed" (65). Ivanov takes it even further: "Among people who lead such intense social struggle, there are few examples of such noble consciousness of one's strength combined with the absolute sincerity of actions, of such belief in victory only for the sake of rightness of convictions. This is a true wonder of self-awareness, the highest practical expression of conscience developed by thoughts and experiments" (79).

For Ivanov, Milton's Satan is a unique artistic creation before which all later demons are "reduced to dust and ashes" (81): "never before and never after did poetry create such grandiose features or rise to such height of personal self-awareness and unshakable pride of the ego as that of Satan—defeated and burnt by Heaven's flashes of lightning (82). In Ivanov's view, Milton could not help but sympathize at least partially with Satan; thus, Satan's speeches are occasionally embodied hymns of individual freedom rather than mere representations of pure evil (84). Milton attempts to discover the moral meaning of *his* life until the end of his days, and in the angry and mournful speech of his last creation, Samson, a Hebraic deliverer, there is a "genuine echo of the author's own thoughts..." (84).

In his unconventional study, M. Dubinskii (1900) surveys the role of a woman in the lives of more than a dozen well-known poets like Byron, Shelley, and Milton, and prose writers like Molière, Cooper, and Swift, among others. The Russian critic opens his brief section on Milton with the following statement: "Milton was married three times. Just this information is sufficient enough for our understanding of how his life was in the family situation" (177). Being a mirth-loving lady, Milton's first wife, Mary Powell, could stand her husband's way of life in this "prison" as she herself called it, only for a month; afterwards she returned to her parents' home. Milton's three pamphlets about divorce and his courting of another lady made jealous Mary come back repenting and kneeling before her abandoned husband (178). Dubinskii believes that this particular scene from Milton's life inspired the poet's imagination for creating a fictional scene between Adam and repenting Eve in his *Paradise Lost*. In Dubinskii's view, Milton's marriage with his second wife, Catherine Woodcock, was "happy in all aspects, but too short," for Catherine died one year after their marriage, giving birth to her first child. For Dubinskii, her memory still lives in Milton's twenty-third sonnet, written shortly after her death (178). The Russian critic concludes his essay on Milton on a sad note: Milton became a widower again for five years, but since he could not do without a feminine house-keeper and a caretaker, he married Elizabeth Minshull, a "woman of the shrewish temper, who poisoned every day of her husband's life" (178). Dubinskii quotes (in Russian) Milton's alleged reaction to Duke Buckingham, who once called Milton's wife Elizabeth "a rose" in her husband's presence: "I am not an expert in colors, but I think that you are right, for I feel her thorns every day." Dubinskii's characterization of Elizabeth Minshull, who outlived Milton by 53 years, is most likely influenced by

Samuel Johnson's biography of Milton, because the Russian critic concludes his comments with a translated quotation from this work: "The first wife left him in horror and returned only from being jealous; his second wife he apparently sincerely loved, but lost very shortly; the third one was a monster, who mistreated his children during the poet's life and who deceived them after his death" (178).

In addition to all these commendable biographical efforts of Russian critics on Milton's life, the very end of the nineteenth century was marked by another important Russian edition of Milton's epics after A. Shul'govskaia 1878 celebrated Russian *prose* translations of the poems and their 1895 reprint—O. N. Chiumina's 1899 *verse* translation of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* published in St. Petersburg. Like Shul'govskaia's earlier translations with fifty illustrations by Gustave Dore in A. F. Marks' lavish edition, Chiumina's *poetic* translation also featured Dore's fifty illustrations, but was published by A. A. Kaspari as a free appendix to the widely circulated Russian periodical *Motherland*, with the altruistic aim to disseminate Milton's poems to as many Russian readers as possible in such an affordable fashion. In Kaspari's own words, "his goal was to produce a first available-to-everyone verse translation of Milton's works" that, published "in thousands of copies" as part of the periodical, "will for the first time circumnavigate all of our motherland and, of course, become a coffee table book of anyone who loves things useful and delicate" ("From the editor"). The editor's brief preface nicely sums up what Milton's epics have become for the average Russian reader by the end of the nineteenth century: Kaspari mentions that Milton's "immortal poems 'Lost and Regained Paradise' are often read with the same regard as the books of the Holy Bible." According to Kaspari, having been translated into all

European languages, Milton's epics have become "a favorite work for any reading person" because of their "high religious content, beautiful common language, mass of poetic pearls, and [its] depth of thought." The editor offers high praise for Chiumina's conscientious effort, by characterizing her poetic translation as "light and melodious," but always fully loyal to Milton's original, including some of its strangeness. For Kaspari, Chiumina's almost literal translation attempts to preserve Milton's "inspiration and holy ecstasy" in Russian verse. This important Russian edition of Milton's epics still had to pass a Russian censor's approval and bears such a mark of October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1899, on its title page, which vividly shows that Russian authors' earlier fight with censorship was still unfinished.

Russian progressive writers and journalists who were also revolutionary democrats kept their struggle with censorship alive despite numerous setbacks and repercussions from the reactionary government. The Russian Revolution of 1905 finally bore some fruit in this regard and the first full Russian translation of Milton's *Areopagitica* edited by P. S. Kogan appeared in print in 1907, as well as the Russian critics' open praise of Milton's anti-censorship ideas in it.

In his 1905 article, titled "Milton as the Apologist for Freedom of Speech," Professor V. Kamburov reminds his readers that, although Milton is known to the general public as "an author of the poem 'Lost and regained paradise,'" his talent as a publicist has also earned him an "immortal fame in the history of political writings" (72). Kamburov paints the political conflict between the Presbyterian Parliament and the Independents and characterizes Milton as a "literary leader of the Independents" (72), whom he viewed as true, eager searchers for Truth and proponents of religious

individualism. Kamburov portrays Milton as a “champion for the freedom of speech” in his *Areopagitica*, and praises *Areopagitica* as a “poetical apotheosis of free speech” (78). According to Kamburov, Milton attempted to prove that evil does not originate in the books themselves, but rather comes from their readers (75). Milton believed that Truth was being revealed to the Independents and thus he rose against censorship that could stifle it (Kamburov 77). Kamburov concludes that Milton considered “the spiritual nature of man as a value in itself that does not need constraints, and despite hundreds of years separating him from modern times, Milton’s ideas have not lost their authority” (78). Professor Kamburov must have read Milton’s works in the original and translated the quoted parts for his article himself. Kamburov’s English-language sources include S. R. Gardiner’s *History of the Great Civil War* and a document from the British Museum titled “Twelve considerable serious questions touching Church Government,” as well as Alfred Stern’s *Milton und seine Zeit*.

Like Kamburov, A. Rozhdestvenskii demonstrated familiarity with Milton’s prose in the original, by quoting from his *Civil Power*, both *Defenses*, *Eikonoclastes*, and *Ready and Easy Way* in his long preface to the full 1907 Russian translation of Milton’s *Areopagitica*, where he emphasizes Milton’s idealism, stoicism, and civic devotion. Like Kamburov, Rozhdestvenskii also hints at contemporary Russian politics when he stresses the timeliness of Milton’s *Areopagitica* even for his own era, three-hundred years later: “its words, though grey from age, still sound as the call of youth and are as fresh as in its first birthday, especially for us, the Russians, one reluctantly wants to add.” Rozhdestvenskii must have painfully realized the entire gravity of the Russian state of affairs: if the 1694 abolishment of the English censorship could be considered as a

posthumous victory for Milton fifty years after his *Areopagitica*, the Russians were still in need of its ideas to take root in their motherland already at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The year after Rozhdestvenskii's lament, the Russian censorship was reinstated in 1908. Taking advantage of the fact that 1908 also marked the 300th anniversary of Milton's birth, the Russian Miltonists like Tiander, Kovalevskii, and Filatov, used this occasion not only to celebrate Milton's poetry, but also to emphasize Milton's active political life and his revolutionary ideas, as well as his energetic participation in the seventeenth-century England's history. Publishing their tributary essays in well-known Russian periodicals, these Russian critics painstakingly painted Milton the man and concentrated on his political prose, as if euphemistically drawing parallels to their own historical circumstances in the years of renewed Russian censorship.

To commemorate Milton's three-hundredth birthday, K. Tiander writes a piece on Milton in the journal *Sovremennyi mir* (*Modern World*) (1909). In this biographical account, Tiander devotes much attention to England's political circumstances in Milton's time, thus primarily highlighting the poet's political writings and even analyzing his epics in this light. Although not openly revealing his own politics, Tiander expresses not only his empathy with Milton, but also a sort of quiet solidarity with the poet's political views, as if they were resonating with Tiander's own political climate in Russia of 1909. For example, when discussing Charles I's personal rule, Tiander betrays his own dislike of absolutism: "Simultaneously with the absolutist tendencies of the king, as always and everywhere, there developed the hunger for power of the clergy" (14).



Likewise, Tiander's attitude towards censorship can be felt when he points out that in revolutionary England of 1640-41, there emerged a lively exchange of ideas in press "no longer constrained by the burden of censorship" (15). According to Tiander, Milton felt like he had "no right to stay silent" and thus wrote five pamphlets within eight months about the church question, which "stand out due to their research and persuasive reasoning" (15). Tiander quotes Milton in detail from these pamphlets to express the poet's views on the corrupt bishops, as well as his ideals of the Church, clergy, and religious freedom. Impressed by Milton's fight for the freedom of the press, Tiander discusses *Areopagitica* at large, again quoting passages that touch on the apparent usefulness of even a bad book in the face of the clear harm of censorship. Speaking of the immense influence of *Areopagitica* on other nations, Tiander mentions France and Germany: "On the eve of the French Revolution, Mirabeau translated this speech by Milton. In Germany, out of all prose works by Milton, only this work had wide circulation" (19). Tiander then notes that in Russia also, "in the days of freedom in the year of 1905,— *Areopagitica* beautified the displays in the bookshops and found not few sympathetic readers" (19). This statement reveals Tiander's present nostalgia for those days of liberty from censorship only three years before.

Tiander remarks that in his political pamphlets about statehood and kingship, Milton anticipates Rousseau's theory about the "limitless power of the people," but in his ideas about the members of the Parliament, Milton actually reflects the "demands of the third class" (21). According to Tiander, Milton's political ideas are not only in sharp contrast to those of Hobbes, but even more consistent than those of the humane statesman Grotius (22). Tiander believes that Milton's views were formed not as much by reading,

as by living and communicating with the great leaders of his epoch, such as Cromwell (22). Of course, Tiander concedes, there was also a chasm between Cromwell and Milton that often “separates activists from theoreticians” (22).

According to Tiander, “deep religiosity that Milton needed as air became a laughing stock” in the Restoration era, and thus Milton’s voice in *Paradise Lost* sounded “as if it appeared from another world” (22-23). Tiander insists on considering *Paradise Lost* “as a monument to Puritanism,” because its main protagonist Adam “constantly professes Puritan morality: he argues for free will with Raphael, discusses heavy consequences of a rich imagination, and develops views on the ideal goals of marriage” (23). Moreover, Milton’s favorite themes for his “dialectical digressions” in the epic include “questions about power, submission, and obedience” (Tiander 23). In fact, everyone is held accountable for his actions—“even God justifies his ways before the reader” (Tiander 23). Milton’s epic even reflects all of the events from the Puritan epoch: the image of Satan—“always brave, strong-willed, proud, and indiscriminate of the means”—shares the features of the leaders from the near past, such as those of Strafford, Laud, Charles I, and even Cromwell (Tiander 23). The members of the Parliament in Hell in *Paradise Lost* are also portraits of real people, just like “in describing the attack of the fallen angels on the army in Heaven, Milton was recalling the defeat of the Royal Cavaliers against the unbreakable wall of the God-inspired Independents” (Tiander 23).

For Tiander, true bravery is one’s willingness to suffer for the sake of the truth, and is “a motto of Milton’s life and work” (24). Milton’s personal predilections and autobiographical touches are also felt in the epic, when he has Adam pray in Eden without any rituals, remarking that God prefers such service, and when he discusses army

leaders of Heaven and Hell, emphasizing that soldiers themselves elected them (Tiander 23). Similarly, Milton, drawing on the Old Testament and his own life experience, holds Eve more responsible for the original sin, which explains why woman is punished worse and why wisdom is superior to beauty (Tiander 23).

Tiander notes that if in *Paradise Lost*, Satan claims victory over the sinless people, then *Paradise Regained* “paints the defeat of the same Satan for the sake of a moral perfection”—a theme Milton found in Christ’s temptation in the desert (24). According to Tiander, *Paradise Regained* shares the same ideas and architectonics with *Paradise Lost*, because “there are three parallel acts in both epics—in Heaven, on Earth, and in Hell” (24). Only in the second epic, the supernatural worlds of Heaven and Hell no longer feature as prominently as the action on Earth, and consequently, the images of Satan and Christ have also undergone the necessary transformations to accommodate this new focus (Tiander 24). Hence, in *Paradise Regained*, Christ “is no longer triumphantly riding his shining carriage, and instead is a human being of unshakable morality, an ideal of Puritanism,” while Satan “is no longer a titanic image” either, as he was in *Paradise Lost* (Tiander 24).

Tiander believes that *Samson Agonistes* is Milton’s “swan song,” because the poet lived and suffered through its every line, this work being “fed by the blood of its author’s heart” (26). As Tiander puts it: “The scene with the guilty wife, the taunting of the Philistine enemies, the revenge of the Dagon worshippers, and finally, the lament on his own blindness—all are the bleeding wounds of Milton’s suffering soul” (26).

In conclusion to his commemorative article on Milton’s tercenary, Tiander compares Milton with the great Russian writer Tolstoy and prefers that comparison to the

traditional one of Milton and Dante by the West European critics (26). Tiander argues that, like Milton, Tolstoy “fought for the freedom of religion from stagnancy, empty-wordiness, and formalism,” and “gave a verdict to the violence and profanity towards human dignity” (26). Despite their differences due to the place and age in which they lived, Dante, Milton, and Tolstoy shared their love of freedom (Tiander 26).

In January 1909, V. Filatov composes an eloquent tribute on the tercenary of Milton’s birth for the Russian periodical *Education*. Filatov not only characterizes Milton as one of those people “whose life closely parallels the life of his country and epoch,” but finds his fanaticism “wonderful and noble” (46). Moreover, finishing the epoch of British Renaissance in literature, Milton is the “missing link between Shakespeare and Locke” (Filatov 46). If in *Comus*, Milton’s Puritanism can already be traced in the victory of wisdom in the masque, his “Lycidas” definitely sounds new notes of the beauties of freedom” (Filatov 47). Milton’s twenty-four pamphlets written during the English Revolution and the Republic are “a fiery bouquet that burns and destroys the old life, but the old life is so strong and stupid that much of what Milton professed is still waiting its materialization” (Filatov 47). In fact, Milton’s tractate on divorce proposes a principle of incompatibility that is “still out of reach for us even now” (Filatov 48). Quoting Milton’s *Areopagitica* at large, Filatov insists that “Nobody else gave a better defense of free speech yet,” and that Milton’s speech is “still fresh” today, after almost 3 centuries (48).

Filatov also characterizes Milton as the “spiritual standard-bearer” of the Independents (49) and argues that, since Europe protested the regicide of Charles I only with a “platonic dismay,” it was Milton rather than Cromwell, who had to defend and

justify the young Republic with his eloquent pen as its Latin Secretary (49). Although Milton's twelve-year public career was rather brief, it nevertheless left a deep trace on his epoch (Filatov 50). After leaving his public post, it was not Milton's blindness that tortured him—it was the lost cause of the Republic to which he devoted all of his life and energy and the consequent Restoration of the monarchy (Filatov 50). The Restoration signaled the triumph of lewdness and perversity—pornography has never reached such heights of foulness and daring before or ever since (Filatov 50). As a result, Milton chose to withdraw into himself and become a poet from a publicist once again, composing stanzas that were “sad and full of proud remembrances,” including his “great poem about paradise” (50). For Filatov, “‘Regained and Lost Paradise’ is a symbol of a great epoch of liberty, and no matter how much Milton tried to retreat into himself, no matter how far Milton's head was in the clouds, his paradisaical gardens nevertheless recall England, his Satan commands like a good colonel, and his heavenly combats betray the militant temperament of the Puritans” (50).

Filatov concludes that although Milton died “in total gloom,” his ideas were not forgotten for long, but were gradually materialized: in fifteen years, the reaction was broken, and the censorship in England forever disappeared at the end of that century as well (50). However, not all of Milton's ideals have become a reality even now: “Milton's heritage is so vast that it was inherited not only by his party—liberals who are in power now, but also by new fighters, who respect in Milton a “fiery standard-bearer of the people's ideals” (Filatov 50).

In his lengthy article also inspired by Milton's three hundredth birthday, Kovalevskii stresses Milton's historical importance as a political thinker and his

influence on the later formation and development of British and American Constitutions. Kovalevskii's sometimes-too-sober assessment of Milton radically contrasts with Ivanov's almost religious fascination with the English poet. Kovalevskii analyzes Milton's prose works without idealizing them: he points out their stylistic shortcomings (an overabundance of quotations in *Areopagitica* [123]), and observes that Milton's ideas were not as original for his time as one might think, for writers, called "anti-monarchists" had already expressed such ideas in the sixteenth century (462). Kovalevskii's skepticism regarding Milton's readability emerges when he compares Milton with Montesquieu: both writers are more often referred to than actually analyzed, but Milton surpasses the French writer even in this type of appraisal (123). According to Kovalevskii, readers react to each writer differently: Montesquieu "tires" his readers with incomplete thoughts, while Milton supplies too much evidence and too many examples which interfere with the development of his main argument. In spite of this criticism, Kovalevskii admits, however, that Milton's treatises are important because they chart a course for later thinkers who will champion the autonomy of the individual. In fact, Milton finds solutions to the issues of freedom of conscience and press that are still considered viable and which ruled the activities of legislative governments even in Kovalevskii's time (138). Nevertheless, Kovalevskii believes that the French essayist Montaigne is more understandable to the Russian audience than Milton, because the former was more balanced in his emotions, not as irascible and rude in his attitudes as Milton, "who is too concerned with the issues of his time," although both lived in the periods of religious and political turmoil (122). In addition, there is a contradiction between Milton's theory of freedom and tolerance and his intolerance towards his

opponents, whether they be Salmasius or those who do not share his beliefs concerning divorce or censorship (123).

In the conclusion of his philosophical study, Kovalevskii points out that the development of state institutions in England does not go either in the direction that Milton desired or that of Hobbes: Milton is the last spokesman of the political thought first expressed by the anti-monarchists; Hobbes is the last mouthpiece for the sake of absolutism. John Locke's theory of the constitutional monarchy prevails over all others, proving the possibility of reconciliation of freedom and autocracy, and the preservation of the state's sovereignty under the division of power (480).

This pre-Soviet Chapter 1 has demonstrated that the appeal of Milton's epics in imperial Russia is undeniable as numerous Russian translations and reprint editions of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* clearly testify. The epics' frequent combination into one volume or even conflation in adaptations indicate their status as sequels, as well as their biblical association in the minds of the Russian editors. Devoted Orthodox Christian Russians found comfort in Milton's epics and *Nativity Ode*, while more politically minded drew inspiration from Milton's prose works. Radishchev derived courage from *Areopagitica* already in 1790 on the eve of the French Revolution, whereas Tible and other progressive writers appealed to it once again in the 1860s during their endless fight for the freedom of the press, only to pass their torch to the revolutionary authors in 1905. Milton's eighteenth-century translators and biographers were cautious about openly revealing the political Milton; however, his late nineteenth-century biographers like Solov'ev and Ivanov heartily embraced his revolutionary side. Milton's political participation in England's history was often projected onto his poetry, by

associating him either with his rebellious Satan (Solov'ev) or, alternatively, with God's legions (Tiander) in *Paradise Lost*.

Thus, the first century and a half of Milton's reception in Russia from its first eighteenth-century Russian translators like Baron Stroganov to the early twentieth-century historians like Maksim Kovalevskii is mainly characterized by the ideological views of his Russian readers and the current political events that often influence their interpretation. The Russian Romantics like Pushkin established Milton's reputation as a political rebel, while revolutionary democrats like Belinskii considered Milton's politics not sufficiently radical. Russian political activists like Radishchev and Kyukhelbeker admired Milton's anti-censorship and liberty ideas, while more conservative critics like Karamzin and Timkovskii appreciated Milton's poetry more than his politics. The Marxist critics of the Soviet regime, the subject of Chapter 2, will inherit both Pushkin's and Belinskii's evaluations of Milton and will take them in yet another direction towards the extreme of an openly atheistic ideological interpretation.



## CHAPTER III

### SOVIET CRITICISM OF JOHN MILTON (1917-1991)

The Soviet reception of John Milton starts with the Bol'shevik Revolution of 1917, when the entire political and ideological regime changed with the upheaval of the Russian monarchy and Orthodox Christianity. Milton's status in Russia also experienced a major shift with the establishment of the new socialist government, particularly his devotional works that suddenly seemed irrelevant to the officially atheistic culture of the USSR. Just a year after the October Revolution, political activist and Soviet propagandist agitator, Vladimir Maiakovskii (1893-1930) gave Milton's Russian legacy the first blow. In the prologue of his 1918 socialist drama *Misteriia-Buff* (*Mystery-Bouffe*), specifically composed for celebrating the first anniversary of the Bol'shevik Revolution, Maiakovskii passed a merciless verdict on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, prematurely dooming it for perdition together with the Bible and the Koran. As an unmistakable champion of the "Left Art Front" and "Communist Futurism," Maiakovskii was allowed to travel abroad, unlike most of the Soviet poets, so he visited Britain, Germany, and the United States in the early 1920s. However, having become disillusioned with Stalinism and the growing Soviet anti-intellectualism and bureaucracy that he satirized in his late plays *Klop* (*The Bedbug*) and *Banya* (*The Bathhouse*), Maiakovskii committed suicide in 1930. Fortunately, Maiakovskii's bold forecast about

Milton's literary fate was not prophetic like A. N. Radishchev's—although both writers were political activists and defied tradition, Radishchev in the eighteenth-century proved much closer to the mark in his 1790 prediction when he included Milton on the list of writers who “will be read until the human race is exterminated” in his censored book.

Becoming aware of the Bolsheviks's hasty demolition of cultural artifacts of the Russian tsarist past, Russian intellectuals like Maksim Gor'kii and Anatolii Lunacharskii attempted to save this valuable legacy from the mindless Soviet destruction or wholesale censure of anything not in tune with the new atheistic ideology. Consequently, these writers understandably feared Soviet censure of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and rushed to stress its revolutionary message and enduring relevance to emerging Soviet morality. Hoping to save Milton's epic in the atmosphere of communal property, Gor'kii insisted that *Paradise Lost* was the fruit of the creativity of the masses rather than of Milton's individual genius. Likewise, Lunacharskii declared Milton's Satan a “cosmic revolutionary” and the English epic's hero, thus revisiting E. Solov'ev's first Russian characterization of Milton's Satan as Prometheus. Witnessing the understandable difficulty for the Russian people in transitioning from an Orthodox Christian to a godless ideology, Gor'kii and Lunacharskii also advocated adopting some religious language and rituals for the socialist agenda of paradise on earth, called “bogostroitel'stvo” (“God-building”). Unfortunately, Gor'kii and Lunacharskii's belief in the practical benefit of practicing the “God-building” philosophy in the new socialist state went against V. I. Lenin's clear distaste for this concept, who did not want to resort to religion in any form or to any end, however desirable.

Such newly-found aversion to old religious ideas may explain the early Soviet reluctance to publish Milton's works, especially during the Stalinist period (1924-1953), and highlights the unspoken reasons behind the drastic difference in the government's attitude toward Milton versus Shakespeare. If Milton became known in eighteenth-century Russia before Shakespeare and enjoyed tremendous popularity among readers because his poetry was much more readily available in abundant Russian and French translations, this statistic was completely reversed in the Soviet period with an astonishing lack of Soviet editions of Milton's oeuvre. In contrast, the editions of Shakespeare's work flourished in the USSR: "Since the October Revolution, over 5,000,000 copies of Shakespeare's works have been published in 28 languages spoken by various peoples of the Soviet Union" by 1966 (Samarin "Preface" *Shakespeare in the Soviet Union* 7). While the undisputed popularity and the official Soviet sanction of Shakespeare in multi-volume editions are undeniable, so too is the absence of an edition of Milton's poetry until 1976: "Shakespeare's collected works translated into Russian in eight volumes, published by Iskusstvo in an edition of 225,000 copies, sold out on a subscription basis" (Samarin "Preface" *Shakespeare in the Soviet Union* 7).

Unlike Milton's works, Shakespeare's plays were disseminated because they better accommodated the Soviets' ideological quest for socialist realism in art. Even Gor'kii, in his article "On plays," championed the Shakespearean realism and put forward his plays as an inspirational model for the development of a new socialist drama with the real Soviet hero V. Lenin as its main protagonist. Apparently, Gorkii's advice "was accepted as a basic tenet of the programme of young Soviet drama in the thirties" (Samarin "Preface" *Shakespeare in the Soviet Union* 11). The stark disparity between the

fates of Milton's and Shakespeare's works in the first two decades of the Soviet administration becomes more poignant during Stalin's Moscow show trials and purges. If the four-volume edition of Shakespeare's oeuvre in English, edited and annotated by S. Dinamov, was begun in 1937 and published upon completion in 1939 (Samarin "Preface" *Shakespeare in the Soviet Union* 7), the first Soviet translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* by S. N. Protas'ev, edited and annotated by D. S. Mirsky, begun in the early 1930s remained unfinished and unpublished due to their sudden arrest in 1937 as part of the Purges. Evidently former Prince D. S. Mirsky was still a suspect for the Soviet government, even though he had joined the British Communists during his exile and had chosen to return to the USSR as Comrade Mirsky. In fact, Mirsky's surviving 1934 manuscript indicates that he had applied Marxist theory to Milton's *Paradise Lost* in his commentary, even drawing the parallel between the English Revolution and the Bol'shevik Revolution of 1917 "for the first time *anywhere*" (Boss "Milton's Influence" 22a).

The famous Soviet writer, Maksim Gor'kii (1868-1936), realizing the threat of censure for Milton's *Paradise Lost* in the Soviet Union, publicly expressed his support for the English epic by stating that *Paradise Lost* was not the product of individual genius, but of "the collective force of the masses," since Milton was "winged by the creativity of the community":

Milton and Dante, Mitskevich, Goethe, and Schiller soared the highest when they were winged by the creativity of the community, when they derived inspiration from the sources of folklore poetry, immeasurably deep, infinitely multifaceted, strong, and wise. By saying that I do not

mean to diminish the rights of the mentioned poets to the world fame and I do not want to diminish them; I merely assert that the best images of the individual creativity provide us with the wonderfully faceted gems, but these gems were created by the collective force of the masses.

(“Razrushenie lichnosti.” *Sobranie trudov v 16 tomakh* 227)

Gor’kii’s friend and Lenin’s Commissar for the Enlightenment, A. V.

Lunacharskii (1875-1933) holds that Milton was “a consistent revolutionary, and not a mere propagandist [‘boltun’]” and “as a publicist who defended his revolutionary reasons to the end, he presents one of the most consistent republicans in the time when the smell of the French Revolution had not even been in the air” (*Sobranie sochinenii* 173).

Sharing Marx’s idea that bourgeois revolutions often “rent” the most appropriate costumes of past epochs, and that the English Revolution was dressed in “biblical clothing,” Lunacharskii attributes the Puritans’ preference of the Old Testament over the Gospels to the former’s social ideas and its spirit of small property ownership (174).

According to Lunacharskii, the prophets, the main creative figures of the Bible, and its various heroes always side with the poor and fight with the rich, those often associated with Baal and other deities. The Puritans, including Milton, embraced the ideals of the Old Testament and applied Israel’s situation to themselves. Milton’s God in *Paradise Lost* is a creator of the world, who does not interfere very much; his Adam and Eve are a married couple who embody the Puritan virtues of honesty, an unfouled bed, the warmth of the hearth, and patriarchy (174). For Lunacharskii, the most curious issue is Milton’s attitude towards his character Satan, who, on the one hand, is repugnant for a Puritan who

sides with God, but on the other hand, forges rebellions; that is why Milton endows Satan with “features of great, solemn and bitter majesty” (174).

Lunacharskii considers Milton one of the greatest poets of all time, for his *Paradise Lost* is written in “marvelous verses, with a great number of the most vivid images” (174). According to this Soviet critic, Milton’s poem is “a theodicy, a justification of God’s ways, a demonstration of how sin came into the world and of how we should liberate ourselves from it through the means of Christianity” (174-75).

Although the English Revolution was a revolution that supported Christ and God against the godless rich, Milton’s “revolutionary heart was so full of rebellion, so full of the protest against the established order that the most interesting and likable character still turned out to be the devil” (175). The “magnificent somber grandeur” of Milton’s Satan is “more profound” than that of Lermontov’s Demon or Byron’s Lucifer (175).

Lunacharskii concludes with an observation that in Milton’s poem there exists “such a peculiar mixing of the narrow-mindedness of the petty-bourgeois Revolution and the fire of the revolutionary impulses” and “in such paradoxical forms” (175).

Moreover, Lunacharskii is the first Soviet critic to draw a parallel between Milton’s Satan and Prometheus (“Mif o Prometee.” *Sobranie Sochinenii* 278) and to view him as a “cosmic revolutionary,” thus making Satan the hero of *Paradise Lost*.

Lunacharskii’s positive assessment of Milton’s Satan evidently followed that of Milton’s daring tsarist Russian biographer Evgenii Solov’ev, whose 1894 authoritative account had already rehabilitated Cromwell, Milton, and Satan of *Paradise Lost* as their poetic embodiment. In fact, Lunacharskii’s play *Oliver Cromwell*, first performed in 1921, portrays both Milton and Cromwell as social moderates and characterizes them with

greater sympathy than the Levelers Overton and Sexby. The English Levelers' and the Diggers' communist goals were so in tune with those of the Russian Bolsheviks that the historical parallels between seventeenth-century England and early twentieth-century Russia were immediately drawn and interpreted as Lunacharskii's criticism of the Left wing of the Party (Boss "Milton's Influence" 39a).

The early Soviet years also demonstrate a growing interest in the history of the Russian-English diplomatic and commercial relations since the sixteenth century as the Russian historian I. I. Liubimenko's various articles on Anglo-Russian relations indicate. Liubimenko's historical scholarship actually straddles both tsarist and Soviet Russian periods and is published in English and French in the foreign periodicals. Although Liubimenko's paper entitled "Anglo-Russian Relations during the First English Revolution" delivered in France on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1928, does not mention Milton's involvement in the Revolution or the role of his *Moscovia* in the Anglo-Russian ties, her opening certainly sheds light on the difficulty of Russian-English relations in the late 1920s: "At a time when Anglo-Russian relations show a great difficulty in being re-established after the Russian revolution of 1917, it may be of special interest to look back to a very far past in English history" (39). Later Liubimenko authors a chapter titled "England and Russia in the Seventeenth Century" for the two-volume Soviet academic edition *English Bourgeois Revolution of the Seventeenth Century* (1954) at the height of the Cold War.

Similarly, Soviet Academician M. P. Alekseev's life-long scholarship on Russian-English literary ties originates with the publication of *Siberia in the News of the Western European Travelers and Writers [...]: From the Thirteenth to the Seventeenth Century*

(1934-36) and culminated in a seminal posthumous volume, titled *Russian –English Literary Connections (in the Eighteenth Century and the First Part of the Nineteenth Century)* (1982). Unlike Liubimenko, Alekseev not only mentions, but devotes an entire chapter to Milton's *Moscovia* in his book on Siberia and a few pages on it in his first chapter of the 1982 volume. Alekseev does not praise or criticize Milton's *Moscovia*, but seeks to assess it for what it actually is—not an independent work, but a compilation from other sources. Consequently, Alekseev considers nineteenth-century evaluations of Milton's *Moscovia* by M. P. Poludenskii, E. P. Karnovich, and even Iu. V. Tolstoi rather outdated. For Alekseev, this work reveals not only Milton's personal interests (geographical, historical, and pedagogical), but also his public interests reflective of Cromwell's state concerns about Russia (301-02). Hence Alekseev agrees with Milton's biographers like Masson that *Moscovia* must have been composed by Milton in the period of 1649-1652, particularly since its manuscript was written in Milton's hand and Cromwell was trying to ameliorate the diplomatic and especially trading relations with the Russian State after the regicide of Charles I (302). According to Alekseev, while the geographical material of Milton's *Moscovia* is completely dependent on its sources, his selective treatment of historical information shows Milton's personal fascination with False Dmitrii and Ian Sobesskii, highlighting his revolutionary concerns about people's sovereignty (303-04). Alekseev also appreciates Milton's deep interest in Russia that is vividly expressed in his poetic imagination in the last four books of *Paradise Lost*. D. S. Mirsky's 1929 London edition of Milton's *Moscovia* popularized that lesser-known work and fueled a new interest in it both in the West and in Russia, which resulted in new Russian and English scholarship on Milton's *Moscovia* and Anglo-Russian relations.



Among such later scholars is the Soviet critic Iu. Limonov, who also takes interest in Professor Alekseev's topic, by publishing a couple of articles and a chapter on Milton's *Moscovia* in the 1970s.

In his brief essay on the Russian-language Criticism of Milton's *Moscovia* in Appendix D of Volume 8 of the Yale Prose (1982), John Gleason claims that after Iu. Tolstoi's Russian translation and copious annotation of John Milton's *Moscovia* (published in 1874), "there has been no further show of interest in the *Moscovia* by Russian scholars since 1874," with the notable exception of a brief chapter by the Soviet academic M. P. Alekseev, who, however, was partially dismissed by Gleason in this statistic because Alekseev "was committed to covering the ground by mentioning every early English writer who had anything to say about Siberia" in his 1941 anthology on Siberia in the accounts of Western European travelers and writers from the thirteenth through the seventeenth centuries (Gleason 608). In his 1982 essay, Gleason does not show any awareness of the research interest in Milton's *Moscovia* and Anglo-Russian cultural relations in fifteenth-seventeenth centuries by the Soviet scholar Iu. A. Limonov in the 1970s (1972-1979). Limonov devoted two brief essays (1972, 1979) and a chapter on Milton's *Moscovia* in his 1978 book on Russia's cultural connections with other European countries in fifteenth-seventeenth centuries. In particular, Limonov discusses the time of composition of Milton's *Moscovia* and its Russian sources, praising *Moscovia* as a valuable cultural monument of Anglo-Russian relations. Another Soviet scholar, I. S. Kon briefly mentions Milton's *Moscovia* in his 1951 article titled "Political views of John Milton," which Gleason admits in a footnote to not having read (Gleason 609n9). In this 1951 essay, Kon does not regard Milton's *Moscovia* as valuable

scholarship because of its “fantastic” elements, instead viewing it as a reflection of Milton and England’s expansionist ambitions and colonial interest in Russia’s riches (136). There has been a renewed interest in Milton’s *Moscovia* in post-Soviet Russia as well, as is evidenced by T. V. Kulysova’s 1999 brief article on *Moscovia*, and more importantly, by T. V. Salynskaia’s 2000 dissertation that also offers her own Russian translation of Milton’s *Moscovia* in linguistic comparison with Iu. V. Tolstoi’s 1874 translation. Most recently, the 2010 reprint of Iu. V. Tolstoi’s original nineteenth-century translation was published in Russia almost a century and half after its first official appearance in print.

Since the Soviet regime officially authorized only the application of Marxist-Leninist theory in interpreting historical events and literary texts, Marx’s explanation of the English Revolution became popular currency and directly affected Milton’s Soviet image. Quoting from the works of Marx-Engels, Lenin, and Stalin became the silent norm for any manuscript hopeful for an official publication. For example, in his 1945 textbook chapter on Milton, A. A. Anikst has only four footnotes and all of them are compulsory references to Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels (198-99)—even though Anikst also quotes from A. Pushkin and A. Veselovskii, he does not honor them with similar bibliographic footnotes, instead limiting his acknowledgement to in-text citations (201). The start of the Cold War right after the end of World War II only intensified this practice, particularly after the publication of I. V. Stalin’s 1950 article on Marxism and the problem of linguistics, which sanctioned its required memorization by students in philological departments across the USSR. Since Stalin’s death in 1953 did not terminate the Cold War, this Soviet tendency persevered as can be illustrated by the 1954 historical

textbook titled *English Bourgeois Revolution of the Seventeenth Century*, or the 1954 literary textbook titled *A Course of Lectures on the History of the Seventeenth-Century Foreign Literatures*, where footnote references to Marx, Lenin, and Stalin still abound, as if highlighting the fact that Marxist citations were silently understood as required for Soviet publication in any discipline.

During the Cold War era, it was a punishable “unpatriotic” offence to make a case of Western influence on Russian or Soviet authors. The ideological rivalry of Soviet socialism with Western capitalism could not allow for a Western “bourgeois” writer like John Milton to influence Russian literature or its greats like Pushkin and Lermontov. Instead, Pushkin’s habitual references to Milton could be used as textual evidence to determine Pushkin’s authorship of an unsigned note in V. V. Vinogradov’s 1939 article, but certainly not any Miltonic influence on Pushkin’s poetry. On the contrary, Russian and Soviet thinkers were always self-deemed to be at the forefront of scientific progress and literary discoveries, fulfilling their 5-year industrial goals and leading the way to the creation of a Workers’ Paradise. It is no wonder then that Soviet Professor R. M. Samarin’s first two articles on Milton in the late 1940s are cautiously packaged as nineteenth-century Russian authors’ evaluations of Milton’s works rather than Milton’s potential influence on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian literature. Both of Samarin’s articles were identically titled, except for the Russian critic’s name—“The Works of John Milton in the Evaluation of” (Pushkin or V. G. Belinskii)—and great care was given to emphasize these Russian authors’ superiority of critical insight and judgment to those of their Western European contemporaries.

In his 1948 article on A. S. Pushkin's evaluation of Milton, Samarin argues for the originality of Pushkin's views on Milton by differentiating them from the Miltonists of the 1820s-30s both in Russia and Western Europe. Unsatisfied with the nineteenth-century literary criticism of Milton represented by Chateaubriand, Voltaire, Coleridge, Hazlitt, d'Israeli, and Macaulay, Samarin declares that Pushkin's characterization of Milton as a political writer and a defender of his people and of the 1648 Revolution is much more meaningful and historically accurate (69). According to Samarin, Pushkin's unique evaluation of Milton is also in sharp contrast to that of the established Russian academic tradition, mainly represented by A. Merzliakov and N. Karamzin. Like their conservative Western European counterparts of the 1820s-30s, these Russian critics also largely viewed Milton apolitically—as a Christian poet, a true visionary, and an aesthete above all politics. Hence Pushkin's forward-looking reception of Milton seems to prove Samarin's premise about Russian and Soviet's supremacy over Western thought.

Likewise, in his 1949 article on V. G. Belinskii's evaluation of Milton, Samarin once again credits the Russian critic with “the leading role of the Russian revolutionary-democratic thought in the literary studies of the nineteenth century” (“*Tvorchestvo Dzh. Mil'tona v otsenke V. G. Belinskogo*” 428). Championing the Russian “revolutionary-democrat” as a pioneer critic in offering the solution to the interpretive crux of Milton's Satan already in his 1838 article, Samarin only considers Shelley's earlier interpretation similar in depth to Belinskii's critical insight, while other contemporary Western Miltonists failed even to approach it (“*Tvorchestvo Dzh. Mil'tona v otsenke V. G. Belinskogo*” 428-31). The Soviet government could not ask for better mouthpieces for its socialist propaganda than Soviet critics R. M. Samarin and his contemporary I. S. Kon.

I. S. Kon's 1951 essay, titled "Political views of John Milton," highlights the weaknesses of Milton's political thought and the "bourgeois" ideology of the English Revolution. In his attempts to expose and denunciate the modern bourgeois ideology as an ardent defender of the Soviet ideological front, Kon analyzes the evolution of Milton's political views during the period of the English Revolution (1640-1660). The author considers his mission to unmask the internal contradictions and inconsistencies of Milton's prose works and their class and historical narrow-mindedness as reflective of the narrow-mindedness and contradictions of the "bourgeois" Revolution itself ("Politicheskii vozzreniia" 92). According to Kon, already in his early works, one can sense Milton's dislike for the feudal system: he protests against the hedonistic morality of the aristocracy in *Comus* and against corruption in the Anglican Church in "Lycidas" (95). Kon believes that the English revolution replaced one kind of exploitation of the masses with another, neither benefiting the common people. The bourgeoisie relies upon military force to take power by overthrowing the existing government, but after their victory, they betray their people by withholding from them any political rights and suppressing their future rebellions (Kon 98).

Kon emphasizes that Milton's political ideas are not only anti-feudalistic but are also anti-democratic in their essence: Milton did not care about the interests of the working class; instead the poet attaches the notion of the "people" for whom he fights to the representatives of his own "bourgeois" class (106). In Kon's opinion, Milton was as much afraid of the common people as of the Restoration; that is why he criticizes the democratic program of the Levelers in 1654 in his *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio Secunda* (1654), the most reactionary of his prose tracts (99). Kon contends that Milton's

understanding of the history of state formation is “unscholarly,” for it completely ignores “the split of the primitive society into antagonistic classes” that served as a point of departure for the emergence of a state—“the machinery” that the ruling class needed for maintaining its power over the oppressed (105). Moreover, Milton’s “freedom of the individual” is bourgeois throughout and does not promise anything to the masses; his “imminent justice” expresses the interest of the bourgeoisie, and his “natural freedom” signifies freedom for the bourgeoisie from feudal regulations, and for the masses—“liberty” from the means of production (Kon 129). Using religious dogmatism, Milton justifies in his works women’s submissive position in a family: “in his republic women do not get any political rights, in his pedagogy there is no place for the education of women, and in his family a woman remains her husband’s slave” (Kon 128). According to Kon, Milton’s *A Brief History of Moscovia* contains some fantastic material, but nothing of scholarly value, although it does reflect Milton and England’s interest in Russia’s riches and their own expansionist notions of colonization (136).

Kon’s dismissal of Milton’s *Moscovia* and of his political prose clearly hinge on his ideological differences with the seventeenth-century English writer, who was not radical enough for the Soviet socialist critic’s taste that found English Levelers and Diggers much more palatable. After all, Christopher Hill’s *English Revolution of 1640* (1941) was translated into Russian already in 1947, and a Russian edition of Gerard Winstanley’s selected pamphlets was published with a prefatory article by the Soviet Academician V. P. Volgin in the series “Predecessors of Scientific Socialism” in 1950. The Marxist interpretation of the English Revolution was not only in vogue in the USSR, but was the official framework for viewing seventeenth-century English history and

literature, especially in Soviet textbooks that aimed at popularizing these ideas to the youth. For example, the 1954 two-volume history textbook *English Bourgeois Revolution of the Seventeenth Century* goes to great lengths to juxtapose Western “bourgeois historiography” and “modern reactionary Anglo-American historiography” to “modern progressive English historiography” represented by Christopher Hill’s 1941 collection of essays on the English Revolution. Likewise, the views of “Russian revolutionary democrats” like A. N. Radishchev, A. I. Gertsen, V. G. Belinskii, and N. G. Chernyshevskii, and of the Soviet Marxist historians are clearly favored in the historiography on the subject.

E. A. Kosminskii, the co-editor of this massive Soviet textbook, revels in exposing the conservative bias of the English who still pretend that the English Revolution did not occur, by erasing it from their glorious history as a shameful spot. According to Kosminskii’s evidence, the official English edition of *Statutes of the Realm* omits the acts and ordinances of the Interregnum (1642-1660) (217) and the multi-volume *Oxford History of England* (1936-37) cleverly divides the seventeenth-century England’s history into two volumes without mentioning the English Revolution: “The Early Stuarts, 1603-1660” and “The Later Stuarts, 1660-1714” (234). As much as the Soviet leaders like Lenin and Stalin enjoyed drawing parallels between the “early bourgeois revolutions,” like the 1648 English Revolution and the 1789 French Revolution, and their own Russian October Socialist Revolution of 1917, they warned against their conflation. For example, Stalin rejected the tempting parallels between the peasant and leveler “communism” of the seventeenth-century England and the socialist proletariat and Soviet Communism (Kosminskii 232). Similarly, Kosminskii chides

Christopher Hill for likening Gerard Winstanley's ideas to "historical materialism" and for viewing him as a precursor to Marxism (237).

Surprisingly, Soviet critic E. L. Rabkin's section on Milton in *English Bourgeois Revolution of the Seventeenth Century* does not contain any references to the "classics of Marxism-Leninism," unlike the rest of this history textbook. However, Rabkin's careful mention of Milton's "bourgeois limitation" and the "bourgeois" nature of Milton's Republicanism that is dismissive of the masses must have made up for this critical oversight. In his effort to trace the evolution of Milton's political views, Rabkin offers a balanced survey of Milton's prose works and his evaluation is more fair to Milton in its tone than I. S. Kon's 1951 diatribe. Rabkin believes that Milton was one of the greatest ideologues of the English bourgeoisie and the new nobility, because his works served as "the ideological weapon in the hands of the Independents" (188). Even Milton's early anti-prelatical prose was already in effect an attack against absolute monarchy, since the latter fully relied on episcopacy and was unbreakably connected with it, as James I famously noted (Rabkin 188). According to Rabkin, Milton's *Of Education* demonstrates Francis Bacon's philosophical and materialist influence on Milton's thought (188-89), but Milton's *Areopagitica* manages to champion freedom of speech and religious tolerance, while at the same time refusing them to Catholics, atheists, and Royalist propagandistic literature (190). Rabkin also holds that Milton's *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (February 1649) influenced the Parliament's 21 March 1649 Declaration printed only a month later, which used some of Milton's principles (190). Milton's *First Defense* was a passionate defense of the "Republic that guarded the interests of the English bourgeoisie and of the new nobility" (192), and Milton's theory of "people's



sovereignty” and “natural right” was much more moderate than that of the Levelers (193). In fact, Milton’s concept of “people” vividly reveals his “bourgeois limitation” (193), because, when speaking of the right to vote and “Senate” positions in his proposed Republic, he only implied rising middle class rather than “a rude multitude” (195). Since Milton’s political ideal of a Republic only included “the best and ablest” people in the positions of power, Milton’s Republicanism was clearly “bourgeois” in its sympathy toward his own class (195). Rabkin concludes that the evolution of Milton’s views clearly “reveals the class roots of his outlook as one of the biggest ideologues of the bourgeoisie and of the new nobility” (196).

Rabkin also points out Milton’s strong defense of private land property and his clear distaste for James Harrington’s “Agrarian Law” proposed in *The Commonwealth of Oceana*—as much as Milton rails against the Episcopal hierarchy in the Anglican Church, he nevertheless does not demand the confiscation of Episcopal lands (194). Rabkin remarks, however, that Milton’s nationalistic ideas about the God-chosen status of the English and their “special historical mission” also served as a justification of Cromwell’s foreign policy of colonialism in Ireland and Scotland, providing a “religious sanction” of conquering and enslaving the “unchosen” peoples (195). Rabkin views Milton’s Satan in *Paradise Lost* as “rather complex and contradictory” and agrees with Belinskii’s famous assessment of Milton’s epic as the product of his revolutionary epoch (196). Rabkin insists that in Milton’s *Samson Agonistes*, “there sounds a passionate call to a struggle”—like his Samson, who did not bend before his enemies and still believed in the victory over the Philistines, Milton was deeply convinced in the inevitable defeat of tyranny and the short-lived nature of the Restoration in England (196).

Although the Cold War and the Marxist-Leninist direction of the Soviet propaganda survived Stalin's death in 1953, the official end of the Stalinist Terror brought with it some freedom of contention in academic circles, whereas previously, any intellectual disagreement with the authorized interpretation was forbidden. As the head of the Department of History of Foreign Literature at the elite Moscow State University since 1948, Professor Samarin with his colleague Iu. B. Vipper decided to publish their lectures on seventeenth-century foreign literatures as an academic textbook in 1954. These lectures applied the Marxist-Leninist theory and Soviet values to the seventeenth-century foreign works so unabashedly and artlessly, that already by 1956, this textbook had acquired two negative reviews, coauthored by four Soviet scholars in the well-read periodical *Zvezda* (*Star*). Such an open backlash to the sanctioned point of view was so brave and extraordinary that it required the co-authorship of four scholars to accuse Samarin and Vipper of "modernizing the past" in order to make it relevant to the present Soviet ideals (Klimenko et al 162). Although Vipper was listed as the first author of this textbook, he was principally responsible for the large section on the seventeenth-century French literature, but the Soviet critics' blame seems to be distributed quite equally between the co-authors. A careful look at the four reviewers' debate with the Soviet textbook's co-authors sheds light on their startling ideological accommodation of the seventeenth-century foreign literature to Soviet cultural and political interests.

According to Klimenko and his colleagues, Samarin and Vipper strive to find in seventeenth-century authors qualities admirable in modern writers, such as "atheism, the struggle for peace, the understanding of the anti-people, property-oriented nature of the bourgeoisie" (157), often making them anachronistically sound "like convicted Marxists"

(158a). To this purpose, any literary themes in seventeenth-century works that do not lend themselves to being interpreted as “political proclamations,” Samarin and Vipper ignore or consider dispensable in their commentaries (Klimenko et al 158b). Moreover, the authors of the textbook are eager to locate textual instances of the seventeenth-century writers’ foresight into nineteenth-century political events, while at the same time explaining away any evidence to the contrary by their “bourgeois limitation”—a term used very loosely throughout (Klimenko et al 158b). According to Klimenko et al, Samarin and Vipper also make foreign seventeenth-century authors “praise Russia and predict its great future” (160b), including Giles Fletcher whose characterization of Russia and its people was so negative that the London’s Moscow Company “tried to destroy the book in order not to ruin the relations with Moscovia” (161a). In addition, the reviewers criticize the textbook’s vague chronological periodization (159) and contradictory definitions of literary movements (161), as well as its co-authors’ historical, biographical, and factual errors in literary interpretation (160-161), which lead to instances when seventeenth-century authors’ beliefs simultaneously “express two or even three ideologies” (162a). A particular case in point is Samarin’s characterization of Milton that is completely built on his bourgeois “contradictions” and “limitations,” while his Satan in *Paradise Lost* manages to express at least two opposite ideologies (Klimenko et al 162b-63a).

According to Klimenko and his colleagues, Samarin managed to commit “theoretical” and “factual” errors in his section on Milton, which the reviewers concede to be “the most responsible part of the chapter on the seventeenth-century English literature” (162a). For example, without explaining the meaning of the twin-poems’

individual titles, Samarin combines the two protagonists of Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" into one character who is not only educated, serious, and contemplative, but also merry (Klimenko et al 162). Likewise, Samarin's analysis of Milton's authorial intention in *Paradise Lost* and his unstable interpretation of Milton's Satan are equally confusing. On the one hand, Samarin presents Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a political "allegory" on the English Revolution in biblical garb, where Satan is the revolutionary and God is the Royalist reactionary force, the King, and thus the enemy of Satan and Adam (Klimenko et al 162b). Since Milton's Satan represents the left wing of the revolution like the Diggers, Adam does not join Satan in his rebellion against God yet, instead preferring to "gather his spiritual strength" and to remain the obedient servant of God's orders as a political compromise (Samarin 176-77; Klimenko et al 162b, 182a). Because Milton did not side with the Diggers, his Adam did not side with Satan either, which indicates to Samarin Adam's, and by extension Milton's, bourgeois "limitation" (Samarin 172; Klimenko et al 162b). On the other hand, in addition to being a poor revolutionary Digger, Milton's Satan also reminds Samarin of a bourgeois salesman and a rich slave-owner, who turns "Arcadia into a state of salesmen, and Utopia—into a colony of slave-owners" (Samarin 181). In his eagerness to have it both ways, Samarin conveniently turns Milton's Satan into both an exploited victim and an instrument of exploitation, which confuses the meaning of this character and its function in the poem for the Soviet reader (Klimenko et al 162b).

Samarin's view of Milton's "contradictory" impulses projects itself even on Milton's versification in *Paradise Lost*: he criticizes Milton's style for its elaborate epic similes and its "chaos of images," which were indicative not only of the linguistic

struggle for the right style in Milton's time, but also of Milton's own philosophical struggle to unite "critical Reason with theology" (188). Suddenly, in Samarin's "linguistic" formula, Milton's poetic failure of an organic unity in his verses becomes also a reflection of the poet's impossible attempt to unite his allegedly mutually-exclusive philosophical beliefs (Klimenko et al 163). Consequently, Samarin's ideological drive to locate political meaning in Milton's style results in yet another critical overreach, just like his misapplication of Marx's view in determining the generic nature of Milton's epic. Samarin applies Marx's words about the impossibility of Achilles' existence "in the epoch of gunpowder and lead" spoken in the context of his criticism of Voltaire's *Henriade*, to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, thus questioning its epic nature and instead likening it to the emerging seventeenth-century novel like Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (51). By arguing that Milton's *Paradise Lost* already shares some features of the rising novel, such as universality, synthesis, and the coexistence of historical and domestic scenes (186), Samarin not only misrepresents the generic characterization of the epic, but also distorts the true history of the novel that clearly shows that the developing novelistic genre borrowed these features from the epic rather than the other way around (Klimenko et al 163b-64a).

In their 1956 sequel review intended as a reply to Vipper and Samarin's letter to the periodical's editor, Klimenko and his colleagues once again express their critical opinion about the textbook, this time dividing their main points of contention into separate sections for clarity. The reviewers question the unclear boundaries of the surveyed "seventeenth-century literature" (178), the actual degree of alleged "consciousness" of the seventeenth-century writers (179), the textbook authors' desperate

attempt to “improve history” at the expense of historical truth (180), and their distortion of the “real historic-literary process” through their “vulgar sociological views of literature” (180). Finally, the reviewers chide the textbook’s authors for their suspicious fetish with the idea of existent “contradictions” in seventeenth-century writers (181) and their unprofessional neglect of “moral questions” undoubtedly raised in the seventeenth-century literature for the sake of magnifying its “political content” instead (183).

One of these four reviewers, Z. I. Plavskin, three decades later co-authored and edited a new textbook on the history of seventeenth-century foreign literature in 1987, with a chapter on Milton composed this time by A. A. Chameev—the new Miltonist of the late Soviet era, who authored the 1986 book on Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, thus becoming the new authority on Milton and ushering Milton into the post-Soviet period as well. If Professor Samarin did not live long enough to write a prefatory essay to the 1976 Soviet anthology of Milton’s poetry, Professor Chameev, on the other hand, was still privileged to compose an afterword piece on Milton in the 2008 post-Soviet luxurious gift edition of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* (in the nineteenth-century prose translation). Chameev’s views on Milton, corrective of Samarin’s, became authoritative in the late 1980s and still dominate among post-Soviet Milton students, especially at the Department of History of Foreign Literature at the St. Petersburg State University, where he continues to teach.

The Western modernists’ attack on Milton in the 1920s and the ensuing critical debate about the exact nature of Milton’s influence and his proper place in English literature did not jeopardize his respected role in the literary canon in the USSR, like it did in the West in the 1930s. Like some of their Western counterparts, Soviet Miltonists

like A. A. Anikst, R. M. Samarin, and I. S. Kon chose to defend Milton from his “bourgeois” detractors like T. S. Eliot, F. R. Leavis, and H. J. C. Grierson, exposing their imperialistic “decadence.” Moreover, these Soviet critics made it a special occasion in 1958 to celebrate Milton’s 350<sup>th</sup> birthday, by writing tributary articles in popular Russian periodicals and addressing the Western controversy surrounding Milton’s legacy.

Published on John Milton’s 350th birthday, A. A. Anikst’s newspaper article “Poet of the English Revolution” in *Soviet Culture* emphasizes how Milton uses a religious biblical plot in his major works to comment on radical ideas for his time. Milton’s treatment of the story of the fall of Adam and Eve differs from the way religion treats it: in Milton’s eyes Adam and Eve’s eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is considered beneficial, for it opens the path to knowledge. Also, if orthodox belief considers God’s punishment for the first people—expulsion from Paradise and toiling on earth—too severe, Milton recommends the value of human labor. Milton’s revolutionary spirit is reflected in his portrayal of the struggle between God and Satan: Milton unwillingly identifies more with the rebellious Satan than with the “King of Heaven.” The brave fighter for Truth and Justice, Milton was against dictatorship; therefore in *Eikonoklastes* and *First and Second Defense*, he advocates the people’s right to choose a ruler for themselves and to overthrow him if his actions harm people’s interests. In fact, Milton establishes the right to execute tyrant kings. Although in Anikst’s age of “dialectical and historical materialism, atomic energy, cybernetics, and flights to outer space,” Milton’s poems based on the biblical stories are “hopelessly out-of-date,” in his own time they contained phenomena of enormous artistic and ideological significance.

In his commemorative article “Mighty Talent” in *Literary Newspaper*, R. M. Samarin shows great respect for Milton—the “son of the English Revolution” and a “humanist writer”—who “cursed the ‘copper throat of war’ and praised peaceful labor,” and who was “invariably concerned with human welfare” (“Moguchii talant” 2). Samarin points out that since Milton’s death there has been a frantic debate about his political and philosophical ideas which has led to several attempts to uphold or denigrate Milton. Samarin calls Milton’s enemies, like T. S. Eliot and F. R. Leavis, the “apostles of decadence” and praises Douglas Bush’s restorative effort *‘Paradise Lost’ in Our Time. Some Commentaries* (1945). Samarin points out several other “honest scholars outraged by the work of ‘evil tongues’ of which Milton himself complained and who are not tired yet of slandering him”—the names of Hanford, French, and Muir are among them. But Samarin is not satisfied with their retiring voice which “lacks Bush’s determination and directness” in exposing those “modern essayists who arrogantly discuss Milton’s works which are completely alien to them.” In fact, Samarin writes a separate scholarly article, also honoring Milton’s 350<sup>th</sup> birthday, but this time solely devoted to his rehabilitation effort and his diatribe not only against D. Saurat, W. Knight, and H. J. C. Grierson, but even against nineteenth-century “reactionary Romantics” like Coleridge, Chateaubriand, and Macauley.

For Samarin, Milton is “a link in a chain that connected the universal curiosity of the humanists of the Renaissance with the encyclopedic learning of the Age of Enlightenment.” He sees Milton’s scientific thought as “starkly contradictory, freeing itself from the grip of the theological dogmatism and sometimes leaning towards materialism,” but finds its ambivalence promoting scholarly inquiries. Samarin asserts



that the overtly religious nature of Milton's works cannot conceal their larger social content. Religious subject matter, familiar to his audience, typically addressed social issues, and thus was the form most understandable to people and most acceptable for conveying his thoughts opposed to absolutism ("Dzhon Mil'ton." *Kul'tura i zhizn'* 2. 54-55). Milton's Samson, the hero of "a powerful revolutionary tragedy," is "a true warrior, who goes to his death, knowing that it will involve victory over his enemies;" even today Milton's poem calls human hearts to battle against the oppressors. Samarin views Milton's success as follows: "From the loyalty to his humanistic ideals Milton derived his spiritual strength and pathos that immortalized his works" (55). Such is Samarin's succinct portrayal of Milton in his yet another tributary piece in the Soviet newspaper *Culture and Life* (1959).

In his scholarly article commemorating Milton's 350th birthday in the Soviet periodical *Questions of Philosophy*, I. S. Kon gives a general characterization of Milton's sociopolitical views and their place in the "struggle of the ideologies during the period of the great bourgeois revolutions of the West" ("Dzh. Milton kak sotsial'no" 110). Kon ridicules the attempts of English bourgeois critics like H. L. Senior and H. J. C. Grierson, to distort Milton's views by inflating out their reactionary features in order to use them as a justification for gangster-like Anglo-American imperialism. H. L. Senior portrays Milton as Karl Marx's predecessor and the exponent of the socialist ideas in his *J. Milton—the Supreme Englishman* (120). H. J. C. Grierson discovers in Milton the idea of the "dictatorship of proletariat" and a "similarity" between his republican project and the Soviet regime (115). Kon believes that their claims are completely unrealistic, for in Milton's works "we do not find any kind of economical program that would even slightly

reflect the interests of the peasantry or the working class” (115). Even during the Restoration, blind Milton does not go quietly—instead he not only tries to comprehend the reasons for the defeat of the Revolution, but also continues to endeavor in *Paradise Lost*. Adam’s fall is complex and his expulsion from Eden means more than just a defeat: Milton’s “optimistic meaning of the biblical tragedy” is that only through the knowledge of good and evil people can learn to value good (117). This idea is made even stronger through Milton’s later works: Jesus of *Paradise Regained* not only withstands Satan’s temptations, but even gains a moral victory over him. Finally, the hero of Milton’s “last and best tragedy,” *Samson Agonistes*, “resists evil not passively, but commits a heroic deed pulling down the columns of the hall within which his enemies are feasting, and thus compensating for his tragic flaw” (117). Milton’s poetry is inspired by the same ideas that inform his revolutionary aims. It is noteworthy how much milder in tone and more sympathetic Kon’s evaluation of Milton has become since his 1951 essay, which may indicate a certain evolution in the Soviet critic’s view in spite of his enduring loyalty to the ideological climate of the USSR.

The 1953 death of the Soviet dictator I. V. Stalin may have been partially responsible for the official increase of scholarly interest in and approval of Milton, as well as the growing publication of Soviet scholarship about his works from 1954 onward, peaking in 1958-59 on the poet’s 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and culminating in the first book-length manuscript on his oeuvre in 1964. R. M. Samarin’s 1964 voluminous monograph on Milton’s works, reworked from his 1948 dissertation, was the first Soviet book on Milton, thus becoming authoritative and influential on Milton’s reception for at least two following decades. It is interesting to speculate about the true reasons behind the

publication delay of Samarin's seminal book on Milton, but the harsh criticism of his 1954 textbook attempt with collaborator Iu. B. Vipser may be at least partially responsible for it, particularly considering that he chose to publish this book in the same year as his book on Shakespeare's realism that was a tribute to Shakespeare's quartercentenary in 1964. Most of Samarin's trademark ideas in this extensive monograph have already appeared in his earlier chapters on Milton and the seventeenth-century English literature in his co-authored 1954 textbook, as is his consistent intellectual bow to the Marxist view of history—Samarin's footnotes characteristically start and end with references to Karl Marx. Marx's nineteenth-century characterization of the 1648 English Revolution as "bourgeois" in nature and his notion that the English people used "the language, passions, and illusions borrowed from the Old Testament" became the main slogan and the lens through which official Soviet literary criticism viewed seventeenth-century English literature, including Milton's poetry. Since Professor Samarin's reception of Milton was also shaped by Marx's ideas, he openly questioned the authenticity of Milton's proclaimed religiosity and declared his use of the biblical imagery as a safe cover from censorship and a resourceful euphemism on Milton's part. Elaborating his view of Milton's authorial intention in *Paradise Lost*, Samarin argued that Milton's original goal was to compose an epic of Revolution, but his regrettable "biblical masquerade" obscured it (238-39). According to Samarin's most memorable claims in this book, although Milton's *Paradise Lost* is "one of rare examples of a tragic artistic failure" in the history of literature (271), Milton's Satan turned out to be a success despite "the poet's aesthetically sinful religious conception" (270).

Predictably, Samarin not only devoted his *shortest* chapter to Milton's *Paradise Regained*, but he also hid it under a vague title "For the sake of 'common good'" on the contents page—such euphemism was surely pleasing to Soviet ideologues with its secular echoes of socialist sloganeering rather than reflecting a work rooted in scripture. In this brief chapter, Samarin emphasized that Jesus came from the ordinary people and lived among the poor people, just like his apostles, who were "an eloquent group of democratic characters of *Paradise Regained*, juxtaposed to the aristocratic 'dictator' Satan" (386). Samarin's Marxist lens magnified Jesus' poverty and his socialist mission "for the common good," as if likening his preaching to the leveling ideas of the seventeenth-century English Digger Gerard Winstanley.

In contrast to his epics, Milton's *Samson Agonistes* is clearly Samarin's favorite work precisely because of its revolutionary content and a physically active hero without any interpretative ambiguities of *Paradise Lost*. Samarin explains the neglect of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century "bourgeois" English critics towards Milton's *Samson Agonistes* by their lack of understanding of its "revolutionary tradition" (444). Likewise, "the nineteenth-and twentieth-century bourgeois" art was "hostile to the people's heroic tradition" (Samarin 444). Samarin believes that Milton's search for a true hero of his poem finally comes to an end with *Samson Agonistes*—stoic Adam of *Paradise Lost*, who resigns himself to God's punishment without rebelling, stoic Jesus of *Paradise Regained*, who withstands Satan's temptations, but is too passive and pacifistic in his resistance, evolve into stoic, but also active Samson, who physically engages with his oppressive enemy (*Zarubezhnaia literatura* 109-11). While there was not enough heroic material from the English bourgeois revolution for Milton to create a truly heroic epic

hero for his *Paradise Lost*, there was plenty of personally tragic material in its aftermath during the Restoration for Milton to create a truly tragic hero for his drama *Samson Agonistes* (*Zarubezhnaia literatura* 109-11). According to Samarin, Milton even invents a new style in *Samson Agonistes*—"English revolutionary classicism" (*Zarubezhnaia literatura* 113). Ignoring the historical fact that Milton's *Samson Agonistes* was published together with his *Paradise Regained* in the first edition, Samarin conveniently chooses to pair Milton's closet drama with *Paradise Lost* instead, finding revolutionary parallels between them to support his own ideological interpretation of Milton as a revolutionary fighter until his death (*Zarubezhnaia literatura* 104). In fact, Samarin criticizes K. Muir's 1955 book on Milton for barely covering *Samson Agonistes* and for ending his analysis on *Paradise Regained*, Milton's "preaching of Christian asceticism," in order to portray Milton of 1660s and 1670s as "already far distanced from the societal problems" (*Zarubezhnaia literatura* 101).

Professor Samarin's 1964 book on Milton together with his cluster of articles and textbook chapters from 1948 onward unquestionably served as an encouragement for young Soviet graduate students to pursue further research on Milton in their dissertations, starting with his own doctoral student at Moscow State University T. I. Paramonova, who wrote an essay titled "John Milton in the Evaluation of 'New Criticism'" and a dissertation on Milton's prose of the 1640-50s in 1972. Paramonova seems to share her mentor Samarin's interest in exposing "New Critics" as reactionary Christian conservatives who downplay Milton's revolutionary personality by focusing only on formalist, aesthetic features of his works and his theological views in order to proselytize their own religious agenda (35). Paramonova's Soviet dissertation on Milton's prose

writing still remains the only stand-alone monograph-length study on this subject. Samarin's influential scholarship on Milton's *Samson Agonistes* together with the Soviet fetish for revolutionary drama undoubtedly inspired E. P. Bortnik's 1969 dissertation titled *Milton's 'Samson Agonistes' and English Dramatic Art in the Middle of the Seventeenth Century*. Completed at L'vov State University, Bortnik's doctoral research also still remains the only stand-alone book-length study on Milton's *Samson Agonistes*. Finally, E. S. Maksudova's 1974 dissertation on the late eighteenth-early nineteenth-century Russian translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, defended at Kazan' State University, represents the first foray of Russian Milton into the linguistic field and Russian-language territory and also remains the only extended research effort on this topic. These three Soviet dissertations on Milton published within the five-year period from 1969 to 1974 reveal not only Milton's newfound popularity among the young Soviet students, but also highlight which of Milton's works were essential for Milton's Soviet image. Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and his prose works, as well as his *Paradise Lost* only authorized in Marxist gloss, were the necessary attributes of Soviet Milton. In contrast, Milton's *Paradise Regained* and his devotional poetry like *Nativity Ode* and *Psalms* were not part of Milton in Soviet guise, and as a result, there were no dissertations devoted to Milton's brief epic or his religious shorter poems during the Soviet period.

It is rather remarkable that any Soviet scholarship on Milton was possible, particularly among students, since there was no published Russian-language anthology of Milton's oeuvre in the first sixty years of the Soviet regime. Major Soviet Miltonists like A. A. Anikst and R. M. Samarin still had to quote from the *tsarist* Russian verse translations of Milton's major poems, such as those by O. N. Chiumina (*Paradise Lost*

and *Paradise Regained* 1899), N. A. Kholodkovskii (*Paradise Lost* 1911), and N. A. Brianskii (*Samson Agonistes* 1911). However, the silent but persistent ideological reluctance to translate Milton's works into Russian during most of the Soviet era finally came to an end with the first Soviet anthology of Milton's selective poetry appearing in print in 1976. Predictably, this Soviet edition conveniently lacked the Russian translations of Milton's *Paradise Regained* and his *Nativity Ode*; however, his Psalms were surprisingly included. This anthology also offers successful Soviet translations of Milton's Latin and Italian poems, usually overlooked by Russian and Soviet Miltonists, as well as his *Comus* despite Valentin Boss's erroneous claim to the contrary ("Milton's Influence" 42b). Edited by S. V. Shervinskii and published by Moscow's "Khudozhestvennaya Literatura" in its multi-volume series "Library of World Literature," this Soviet edition was impressively distributed in 303,000 copies and contained eight illustrations to Milton's *Paradise Lost* by Gustave Dore. The Soviet translator of Milton's *Paradise Lost* was A. A. Shteinberg (1907-1984), while Iu. B. Korneev was the translator for all of the other poetry by Milton: *Samson Agonistes*, *Comus*, *Lycidas*, *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, Sonnets, Psalms, Epitaphs, Latin Elegies and Epigrams, Italian poetry, and other English poems. The explanatory notes to Shteinberg's Russian verse translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* were prepared by I. Odakhovskaya and the introductory essay on Milton in this Soviet anthology was penned by a famous Shakespearean and Miltonist, A. A. Anikst, rather than Professor R. M. Samarin, the famous author of the only Soviet book on Milton, due to the latter's unexpected death in 1974. Having authored various textbook chapters on Milton in the 1940s and 1950s, before Samarin took over this privilege, Anikst definitely rose to the

occasion with his epic essay on Milton serving as a preface to the first Soviet edition of Milton's oeuvre.

The 1976 Soviet anthology of Milton's poetic works became an instant classic with Soviet readers and certainly had a major impact on further research interest in Milton. Since there were no new attempts at Russian translation of Milton's poetry until the twenty-first century, this Soviet edition was even reprinted with only minor changes twenty-three years later in already post-Soviet Russia in 1999 by St. Petersburg's publisher "Kristall" in 7,000 copies. Most incredibly, there has not been a new translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* since this 1976 Russian verse translation by A. A. Shteinberg—not only has his celebrated translation been unmatched, but it was done under extraordinary personal circumstances, which could have jeopardized its creation altogether. Although Soviet poet and artist Arkadii A. Shteinberg (1907-1984) had dreamt about translating Milton's *Paradise Lost* since his politically eventful youth, it was actually his eight-year incarceration in the Gulag by the Soviet government in 1944 that afforded him sufficient time and "leisure" to materialize his ambition. Shteinberg's fluency in German and his artistic inclinations proved a double-edged sword for his Soviet fate ever since his initial volunteering for the Red Army in World War II: his excellent knowledge of German was at first utilized by the Soviets in propagandistic brainwashing of the enemy, but then his German fluency combined with his alleged collecting of enemy soldiers' songbooks (according to the Romanian Communists' report) made him a real suspect in the eyes of the Soviets, as his wheel of fortune suddenly turned in 1944. Having been released from prison in 1952, Shteinberg finally returned to Moscow only after Stalin's death the following year. Shteinberg's ironic fate serves as



yet another powerful testimony not only to the Stalinist Terror in the USSR, but also to the unshaken poetic status of Milton by the Western controversy in the hearts of talented Soviet poets like Shteinberg. Shteinberg also enjoyed teaching the art of poetic translation to his students—a skill that really blossomed during the Soviet period, as is demonstrated by countless competent Soviet translations of foreign-literature masterpieces, particularly from French.

Before the first 1976 Soviet anthology of Milton's poetry prefaced with A. A. Anikst's authoritative essay became available as a convenient "textbook" for Miltonists, in addition to Samarin's 1964 interpretive opus on Milton, the actual textbooks on seventeenth-century English literature with a customary chapter on Milton filled the void for philological teachers in the USSR. Before R. M. Samarin entered the academic scene with his clearly Soviet mindset and Marxist outlook, A. A. Anikst's textbook chapters on Milton painted a fairly objective image of Milton for philological students. For example, in his 1945 textbook on the history of English literature, Anikst argues for an enduring "duality" in Milton derived from the cohabitation of his "humanistic education" and his Puritan convictions (179), which informs his works and explains their frequently contradictory philosophical impulses. However, Anikst believes that Renaissance Humanism triumphs in Milton's poetry more often than Christian Puritanism: Milton's Eve in *Paradise Lost* does not fall for Satan's flattery like she does in the Bible, but is tempted by knowledge like Marlowe's Faust (191-92). Moreover, Milton's Eve plays a major, not lesser role in the poem than Adam, compromising Milton's Puritan conviction in man's superiority and once again underlining Milton's humanism (191). Anikst also locates the features of Renaissance humanism, such as "its chaotic materialism" (182), in

the materialistic elements of Milton's philosophy in *Paradise Lost* (182), including his materialistic angels (183) and even materialistic God (190).

For Anikst, the "revolutionary content" of Milton's *Paradise Lost* that departs from the "religious legend" about God and Satan in the Bible cannot be "the expression of the orthodox religious point of view" (188-89). Anikst's explanation for the inherent contradiction in the long epic is quite simple: "Satan's struggle against the heavenly God inevitably associated in Milton's mind with the Puritan revolt against the earthly king, and naturally made the political sympathies of the author of *Iconoclastes* paint the rebel angels with greater sympathy" (191). Even though Anikst attempts to solve the enigma of Milton's Satan by stating that "the Puritan Milton sides with God, while the Republican Milton fully sympathizes with Satan" (191), he does not agree with Shelley's claim that *Paradise Lost* represents "the total rejection of religious outlook" (190).

According to Anikst, the plot of Milton's *Paradise Lost* has more elements of the tragedy than of the epic, including its main contradiction that Satan, the poem's "only truly heroic protagonist," cannot be acknowledged by Milton to be its real hero due to the author's religious beliefs (199). Anikst concludes that Milton was still under the influence of the Elizabethan playwrights and thus was better served by his dramatic effort in *Samson Agonistes*, composed in a form of the classic ancient tragedy, which signaled the beginning of classicism in English drama (199). In his late works composed after the Restoration, Milton preached as a "biblical prophet" that the spirit of the Puritan Revolution was still alive "in the hearts of its loyal devotees" and called to a renewed "fight and revenge" with his Samson (Anikst 187). Anikst memorably argues that Milton's *Paradise Regained* is much closer to *Comus* in its temptation theme and

philosophical questions than to its alleged prequel *Paradise Lost* (194-95). In fact, Milton's Jesus of *Paradise Regained* is not a religious concept of Christ and does not have any supernatural features, but instead is the embodiment of "the Puritan and humanistic ideal of a human being" (194-95).

While Anikst's overall characterization of Milton seems unbiased, the Soviet critic also takes pains to find some features in Milton's works that can possibly reflect Soviet values in order to please his Marxist-Leninist censors, by slipping in brief social commentary. In addition to mentioning Milton's peasant family origin (175) and his humanistic materialism, Anikst points out that Milton's *Comus* is not only a judgment against "aristocratic luxury and depravity," but "even a protest against unequal distribution of life's bounty" (180). Likewise, Milton's *Paradise Lost* shows that natural calamities are not as terrible for a human soul as "social" tragedies like "war, despotism, and social inequality in feudal society" (193-94). Since Marx's famous questioning of the possible existence of Homer's *Iliad* with the invention of the printing and that of Achilles "in the epoch of gunpowder and lead" becomes the official Soviet explanation of the aesthetic failure of *Paradise Lost*, Anikst must humor this notion as well. Thus, according to Anikst, Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a whole and particularly as an epic poem is "clearly unsuccessful" due to the "sinfulness of [Milton's] attempt to create an epic when there were no real and necessary preconditions" for such epic poetry (198-99). Also, Milton's "artificial crossing of the epic form, developed by the Greek art, with the Christian biblical mythology" results in an insufficiently organic work (Anikst 199). In Anikst's words, there is also a definite echo of the eighteenth-century Russian socialist critic V. G. Belinskii's contemplation about the "artificiality" of the epics from the

sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries compared to the authenticity of the ancient Greek and Roman epics, already discussed in the pre-Soviet Chapter of this study.

Ever since A. A. Anikst's 1945 juxtaposition of the Puritan and the Republican Miltons, later official Soviet textbooks picked up and popularized this interpretation beyond its original context among the young Soviet readers. In his 1954 co-authored textbook, R. M. Samarin elaborated upon Anikst's concept even further with his own Marxist notion of Milton's "biblical masquerade" in *Paradise Lost*, which also became adopted by future textbook authors like S. D. Artamonov. However, unlike Anikst, Samarin insists that the religious and historical content of Milton's *Paradise Lost* is in a state of an "irreconcilable contradiction" (189), as if forgetting that Puritanism in the epoch of the English Revolution was an integral part of Milton's historical reality and that Milton's religious and ethical beliefs were also the product of his historical epoch. Hence Samarin's rebuke that "Milton was not sufficiently brave and independent to reject religious beliefs" (189) is similarly unhistorical, since as an active participant of the Puritan Revolution, he logically had to believe in and defend its religious ideas. The influence of Samarin's views on Milton, expressed both in his 1954 textbook entries and his 1964 book on Milton, is undeniable on Milton's characterization in subsequent textbook chapters by other Soviet authors like co-authors G. V. Anikin and N. P. Mikhal'skaia (1975) and S. D. Artamonov (1978). Moreover, Samarin himself authored chapters on Milton for various textbooks on the history of English literature or foreign literatures in the mid 1950s and 1960s that were reprinted in the 1970s. In fact, the propagation of Samarin's influence can be measured by the 1973 publication of the already fourth edition of his co-authored textbook with S. D. Artamonov and Z. T.

Grazhdanskaia titled *The History of Foreign Literature of the Seventeenth-Eighteenth Centuries*. N. P. Mikhal'skaya, the co-author of the 1978 textbook on the history of English literature, became its sole author in its 2007 post-Soviet version.

In their co-authored 1975 textbook, G. V. Anikin and N. P. Mikhal'skaya once again juxtapose the Puritan and the revolutionary Miltons, noting that Milton's "religious views demanded submission to the divine will, [whereas his] revolutionary convictions called for the fight against despotism" (102). By creating an image of a conflicted Milton, torn by his religious and revolutionary convictions, these Soviet critics conveniently forget that Milton's Puritan beliefs actually led his revolutionary activism towards "God-sanctioned" regicide of Charles I, an earthly tyrannical king. Samarin's idea of Milton's political allegory of the English Revolution in biblical clothing in *Paradise Lost* still had academic currency even in the late 1970s. For example, in his 1978 textbook on the history of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century foreign literature, S. D. Artamonov declared that Milton's thoughts about his revolutionary captain Oliver Cromwell became symbolized in the image of Satan in *Paradise Lost* (248): "the black wings of Milton's Satan, glistening in the cosmic rays of the universe, were in reality only the rough wool Puritan costume with the white, but not always clean cuffs and collar" (218). In the second 1985 edition of their co-authored textbook on the history of the English literature, G. V. Anikin and N. P. Mikhal'skaia still assert that Milton used the biblical theme for "the development of the revolutionary content: rebellious Satan's revolt against God's might reflects the dire conflict of Milton's epoch" (92). Thus, even a brief survey of the Soviet textbooks on the seventeenth-century English literature demonstrates that their authors took pains to divorce religion from the English

Revolution, by overlooking the revolutionary core of the Puritan movement, which inevitably resulted in a historically inaccurate picture of both the Puritan Revolution and of the religious motivation in Milton's revolutionary activity.

However, towards the end of the Soviet era, M. Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* in the 1980s widened the ideological boundaries, by allowing new critical points of view in print. Young Miltonists like A. A. Chameev could truly reassess Milton's life and works without necessarily subscribing to the official Marxist interpretation of the approved Soviet textbooks. In fact, Chameev's 1986 book on Milton's *Paradise Lost* interrogates Samarin's long-standing evaluation of Milton's epic as "revolutionary" in its conception, since it had been conceived by the young poet already in the late 1630s—before the English Revolution (*Dzhon Mil'ton i ego poema* 37). Finding flaws in earlier Soviet interpretations, Chameev insists that they tend to overlook the moral-philosophical problems of *Paradise Lost*, while modernizing Milton and exaggerating his political insight instead (*Dzhon Mil'ton i ego poema* 9). Similarly, Chameev contests the traditional view of the Soviet textbooks that attributes the puzzling characterization of Milton's Satan to the conflicted personality of Milton the Republican and the Puritan. Exposing an irreconcilable contradiction in the Soviet explanation of Milton's authorial intention, Chameev points out that "to state that the English poet strived to embody the idea of the Revolution in the symbolic image of the devil would mean either that Milton was an atheist, who sincerely rejected religious dogma, or that he had renounced his revolutionary beliefs during the Restoration" (*Dzhon Mil'ton i ego poema* 36). Unlike R. M. Samarin, Chameev has no doubt that as a genuinely religious man, Milton could only imagine God as the source of the Good and only Satan as the embodiment of Evil (36),

and that for Milton, the English Civil War was “a reflection of the universal war between Good and Evil” (40). Consequently, in *Paradise Lost*, Milton “strived to embody the idea of the final victory of Good over Evil when Almighty God turns even Evil itself into Good” (Chameev 88). Hence Milton’s revolutionary sentiments against earthly tyranny actually derive from his Puritan religious convictions and obedience to God (*Dzhon Mil’ton i ego poema* 90).

Unlike R. M. Samarin, Chameev also holds that “nor religious, nor moral, or political views of the poet [Milton] could allow him to make proud Satan a hero of his epic” (89). In fact, Chameev strongly believes that “[t]here is much evidence in the poem indicating that the fallen angel, according to Milton’s plan, should have become the embodiment of Evil” (89). However, Chameev does concede that Milton’s Satan, in addition to the original role that his author had assigned to him, took on yet another role in *Paradise Lost* that is “truly satanic,” by starting to “live his own life in the poem and rebelling not only against the Creator of the Universe, but also against the plan of his own true creator-author” (89). Despite its fresh ideas, Chameev’s 1986 monograph still reflected some residual Soviet mentality, by revealing ideological preference for Christopher Hill’s book on Milton over Balachandra Rajan’s 1967 book of essays commemorating the tercentenary of *Paradise Lost*, which allegedly ignored the epic’s “revolutionary pathos” (*Dzhon Mil’ton i ego poema* 8-9). Predictably, due to their Marxist outlook, Christopher Hill’s books were much more eagerly translated and disseminated in the Soviet Union than the works of other Western Miltonists, who used competing methodologies and theories. Thus, Chameev completely rejects Western

studies that employ such “false” methodologies as applying “formalist and structuralist” theories to Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (*Dzhon Mil’ton i ego poema* 8-9).

The gradual ideological shift in the late Soviet era can also be measured by tracing the change in the Soviet critics’ opinions on the subject of “Pushkin and Milton”—V. V. Vinogradov initiated this topic already in 1939, R. M. Samarin popularized it in 1948, M. I. Gillel’son resurrected it in 1979, and M.G. Sokolianskii offered a corrective to it by challenging Samarin’s established view in 1989. In his attempt to prove Pushkin’s authorship of several notes in the Russian newspaper *Literaturnaia Gazeta* [*Literary Newspaper*] of 1830, V. V. Vinogradov discusses the similarity of the linguistic and stylistic characteristics found in these notes with Pushkin’s phraseology and tone in his other works. One of these notes appeared on March 17<sup>th</sup>, in the sixteenth issue of the newspaper, and is attributed to Pushkin because of its allusion to Milton—the author draws an ironic parallel between a proud and independent Milton and modern journalists, Pushkin’s contemporaries. The author of the note quotes Milton’s idea of his desired audience and then states that this poet’s proud desire is sometimes repeated in his own time, but only with a little twist: a limited audience is enough for his contemporaries “as long as there is plenty of buyers” (465). Vinogradov believes that such a juxtaposition of Milton’s image to the sellers of modern literature is typical and characteristic of Pushkin, who often alludes to Milton as the greatest poet of humanity in his several articles, the most exemplary of which is “About Milton and Chateaubriand’s Translation of ‘Paradise Lost’.” In all of his essays, Pushkin describes Milton as a proud, strict and inexorable poet, who, like Dante, did not cater to the fashionable tastes of the crowd (466). In his essay “On the Russian literature,” Pushkin places Milton in the same



category with Shakespeare. In his work *Journey from Moscow to Petersburg*, among writers who “will be read till human race is exterminated,” because “true beauty will never grow dim,” Milton’s name is mentioned third after Homer (Omir) and Virgil, and is followed by Racine, Voltaire, Shakespeare, and Tasso. This context increases the probability of Pushkin’s authorship of this particular literary note, in addition to linguistic, stylistic and historic-literary evidence, and it should be included in the collection of Pushkin’s works (466).

In his 1948 essay, R. M. Samarin traces the development of Pushkin’s views on John Milton and determines their originality, differentiating Pushkin not only from his Russian compatriots in literary criticism, but also from Miltonists of Western Europe in the 1820-30s. The first proof of Pushkin’s familiarity with Milton appears in Pushkin’s poem *Bova* of 1814, where the author demonstrates a good-natured ironic attitude towards Milton’s poetry in the vein of the comically ironic conception of the poem: “I [Pushkin] did not dare in nonsense poems/ to fry cherubims with cannons,/ live with Satan in Paradise...” (my translation of the excerpt from Pushkin’s *Bova*). Pushkin’s attitude towards Milton changes however already in the 1820s, when he notes in his article “On Classical and Romantic Poetry” (“O poezii klassicheskoi i romanticheskoi”) of 1825, that “England put forward with pride the names of Spencer, Milton, and Shakespeare against the names of Dante, Ariosto and Calderon.” Again, in another article of that year, criticizing the aristocratic nature of the French poetry of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries, Pushkin emphasizes the profundity and seriousness of Milton’s works by pointing out that neither Milton nor Dante wrote “for the favorable smile of the fairer sex.” According to Samarin, both of these allusions to Milton reflect

Pushkin's constantly active interest in the English poet. In 1834, viewing Milton's talent in the "courage of expressions" and the "courage of composition," Pushkin admires his originality, stating that "none of the French poets dared to be distinctly original like Milton, none of them renounced contemporary fame." According to Samarin, Pushkin in his article "On Milton and Chateaubriand's Translation of 'Paradise Lost'," uses the subject matter of his article mainly as material for new attacks on the chauvinism of French literary thought (63). Samarin believes that Milton was Pushkin's idea of a poet—so adamantly does Pushkin rail against Milton's distorted image created by the reactionary romanticism. Pushkin insists on his own assessment of Milton: "political writer, known in Europe for his bitter and proud eloquence," who "in days of evil, the victim of evil tongues, in poverty, prosecution, and blindness retained the inexorability of the soul" (64). Pushkin looked up to Milton as a patriotic citizen, a writer of the revolutionary epoch, the enemy of the English absolutism—all reasons why he mentions mainly Milton's political works like *Defensio populi* and *Iconoclastes* that raged against monarchy and defended the system of the Republic and revolutionary violence (65).

Samarin surveys the West European literary criticism of Milton and sums up his impressions of Milton's portrayal in them as: a "Christian" poet (Chateaubriand), also an "infuriated beast" (Voltaire), then a "visionary poet hoping for the attainment of the transcendent ideal" (Coleridge), also an "aesthete with a tempestuous political past" (Hazlitt), then a "liberal knowing the Bible and the ancient writers" (I. d'Israeli), and finally a "genius soaring above all parties" (Macaulay) (68). Samarin contrasts this gallery of Milton's portraits with Pushkin's portrayal of John Milton—a political writer of the "European scale," a "rigorous defender" of the Revolution of 1648 and a "defender

of his people”—a more significant and historically accurate depiction of Milton (69). Samarin believes that Pushkin’s fresh assessment of Milton is not based on the previously established evaluation of the English poet by the Russian critics like Karamzin and Merzliakov. Instead, Pushkin follows another Russian tradition that emerges from Radishchev and is adopted by the Decembrists like Kiukhel’beker, who have found in the author of *Paradise Lost* those qualities of a “political writer” that Pushkin so greatly esteemed (69). Pushkin adopts this critical tradition and enriches it through his broad erudition, through his own artistic impression of Milton (70). Pushkin’s original evaluation of Milton can be perceived if compared and contrasted with that of Gnedich who follows Karamzin’s tradition. Gnedich sees in Milton a poet-sufferer, whereas Pushkin sees him as a poet-warrior, leading Gnedich to translate from French into Russian verses 4-55 from Book 3 of *Paradise Lost* that tragically paints tribulations of blind Milton, who “no longer sees the world but therefore recreates it with greater power in his own creation” (70). Pushkin however prefers another autobiographical episode from Milton’s work—verses 1-39 from Book 7 that contains a confession of a poet-independent lonely withstanding his political enemies. It is Milton’s faithfulness to his own principles that so much appeals to Pushkin, the sympathizer of the Russian Decembrist movement, a censored writer, who himself, like Milton, was not spared by the “evil tongues” of the “evil time” (70).

In his 1979 article, M. I. Gillel’son traces Chateaubriand’s influence on Pushkin’s literary ideas and imagery by paraphrasing Komarovich’s argument and by listing Chateaubriand’s works in Pushkin’s personal library that had been read by Pushkin before his untimely death. Then he argues that the two volumes *Experience about*

*English Literature* (*Essai sur la littérature anglaise*, 1836) that Chateaubriand submitted for publication together with his translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, served as Pushkin's inspiration for his article "About Milton and Chateaubriand's Translation of *Paradise Lost*.'" He further argues that Pushkin's article had not been completed, interrupted by his death in 1837, and he offers some suggestions as to what particular ideas and topics would have been developed by Pushkin in the second part of his article. Gillel'son also attempts to resolve the enigma of Pushkin's allusion to Milton's portrayal by Walter Scott in his novel *Woodstock*. Juxtaposing Victor Hugo's ugly portrayal of Milton's character in his tragedy *Cromwell* and Albert de Vinie's false characterization of Milton in his novel *St. Mars* to the noble portrayal of Milton's personality by Walter Scott in his *Woodstock*, Pushkin refers to the scene in the novel where allegedly one of the main characters meets Milton in Cromwell's office. Such a scene however does not exist—instead Milton's poetry is only recited by one of the main characters. However, it arouses ardent arguments and anger in the royalist, who cannot reconcile the idea that such beautiful poetry can be written by such a fanatic republican like Milton—that "bloodthirsty author" of *Defensio Populi Anglicani*.

In his 1989 essay, M. G. Sokolianskii investigates Pushkin's reception of Milton in his attempt to eliminate some blank spots in the research field "Pushkin and Western literatures" and especially to contribute to the issue of "Pushkin and Milton" represented so far by a single article—"The Works of John Milton in the Evaluation of Pushkin" (1948) by R. M. Samarin. Sokolianskii points out that the acquaintance of Russian readers with Milton's works takes place in the middle of the eighteenth century when the first Russian translations of his works appear (130). He lists the names of Russian

writers, critics, translators, and historians of literature who expressed serious interest in Milton before Pushkin: A. Pisarev, A. Merzliakov, I. Davydov, N. Karamzin, A. Radishchev, V. Zhukovskii, N. Gnedich, V. Kiukhel'beker. Sokolianskii disagrees with R. Samarin's strict differentiation between the "two traditions" of Milton's reception by the Russian literary critics, viewing such a division as an oversimplification and, in defense of his view, points out examples of similarly positive evaluation of Milton by the pre-Pushkin Russian writers like Radishchev and Merzliakov. Radishchev, for example, admired Milton's "power of delineation," and Merzliakov was impressed by the "wrestling-with-God pathos of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and by Milton's enthusiasm as an artist" (131). Kiukhel'beker, on the other hand, seems to have a "neutral discussion of the harmony of Milton's poems and the exactness of his descriptions" (131). For Sokolianskii, Samarin's attempts to separate Pushkin from the academic literary criticism means "to detach him from the framework of Karamzin's tradition." Sokolianskii believes that it is hard to overestimate Karamzin's significance in the reception of history and historical figures, but that fact does not presuppose that Pushkin and Kiukhel'beker merely repeated Karamzin's assessment of Milton. Although Milton's political radicalism did not attract all Russian critics in the same degree, there formed one broad tradition of his reception by the second half of the eighteenth century, and Pushkin inherited this academic literary tradition (represented by A. Merzliakov and I. Davydov) and that of Karamzin (131).

Sokolianskii also disagrees with Samarin on the point that Pushkin's early work *Bova* already reflects the formation of the Russian poet's serious and stable attitude towards Milton (135). Sokolianskii treats Pushkin's comment on Milton in that early

experiment as “criticism in the heat of the moment of a young college student” and from being Voltaire’s admirer. Sokolianskii is much more interested in investigating Pushkin’s degree of knowledge of Milton’s works and his sources for the formation of that knowledge in his college years (136). The author summarizes the polemics among the Russian critics about Pushkin’s literary sources for his work *Gavriiliada*. Theories about such influences include Milton’s *Paradise Lost* in Delil’s translation (B. Tomashevskii), Parny’s *Le Paradis Perdu* (P. Bartenev), Apocrypha, Moldavian folklore of Bessarabiia where the poem was written (M. Alekseev), Armenian legend (S. Lur’e). Sokolianskii supports Tomashevskii’s theory and adds to the evidence of Milton’s influence on Pushkin’s poem by pointing out that the encounter of Gabriel with Satan in Pushkin’s *Gavriiliada* corresponds more with that of Book 4 and Book 6 of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* than with Parny’s poems. In addition, epic intonation of the narration and the Russian analogue of the iambic meter of Pushkin’s work further indicate Milton’s influence (138). At any rate, Sokolianskii stresses the importance of the point that “Pushkin’s reference to Milton broadens and deepens our impression of Pushkin as Milton’s critic” (139). Sokolianskii disagrees with Samarin’s contrasting Pushkin’s reception of Milton to that of all European critics of the 1820-30s, stating that there were some European contemporaries of Pushkin who held similar views with the Russian poet, such as Shelly, Coleridge, and Scott (139). Unlike Samarin, Sokolianskii sees the importance of Pushkin’s views on Milton in the context of Russian literature and literary-critical thought: “Pushkin absorbed and synthesized all the best that had been obtained by the Miltonists before him” (139). Pushkin encourages interest towards Milton’s stature and his works and “legalizes attention towards Milton’s texts in the *original*, neglecting

the French intermediaries” (139). Most importantly, according to Sokolianskii, Pushkin “brings Milton to life for Russia,” making his works relevant to the Russian literary reality,” whereas in pre-Pushkin Russian literary criticism, Milton’s figure and his works existed as “mere facts of the history of literature and of the literary past” (139).

After the first Russian translation of Milton’s *Nativity Ode* by V. Andreev in 1881, there was no new translation of this poem for over a century, until T. Iu. Stamova’s 2006 post-Soviet translation of it in A. N. Gorbunov’s scholarly edition of Milton’s complete poetry. However astounding, the explanation for this statistic is rather simple—there was simply no place for Milton’s commemorative poem on Christ’s birth in the atheistic ideology of the Soviet empire, particularly since there was no way of making it something other than what it is ideologically. The Soviets have managed to adopt some of the main traditional Christian attributes of the Christmas celebration in the West without inheriting the religious meaning behind them, by merely stripping these symbols from theological content and adapting them to the Soviet version of the New Year’s secular holiday. In this formula, the traditional Christmas tree was replaced with the atheistic New Year’s tree and the Star of Bethlehem on the top of the Christmas tree was substituted with the Soviet Communist Red star. Similarly, traditional Santa Claus became Russian “Father Frost” (“Ded Moroz”) and did not leave presents under the New Year’s tree to the Soviet Union’s children until New Year’s Eve. Also, the Western figure of Mrs. Claus was replaced with Russian “Snowgirl,” who was Father Frost’s young and unmarried helper.

Soviet Milton scholarship, represented mainly by A. A. Anikst, R. M. Samarin, I. S. Kon and A. A. Chameev, portrays Milton as a revolutionary, almost an advocate of

socialism, at the same time that it criticizes him for not being radical enough and for being misguided by his Christian beliefs. Samarin strongly believed, however, that the theological theme found in Milton's works served only as a cover for his radical political philosophy because Milton feared censorship. According to this hypothesis, Milton's epic *Paradise Lost* stages the political struggle of the 1640s, where Milton, Cromwell and their supporters represent the rebel angels led by Satan against the Catholic royalists, with Charles I as their head, depicted as heavenly authorities. This reasoning also explains why Milton's Satan turned out to be a more impressive character than Milton's God.

R. M. Samarin is by far the foremost Miltonist of the Soviet era, whose fundamental effort—a groundbreaking manuscript *The Works of John Milton* (1964)—and numerous journal and newspaper articles, textbook chapters, and published lectures, eclipsed all other Soviet studies on Milton. Many of his articles and conference papers commemorate the 350th anniversary of Milton's birth; two of his articles investigate Milton's assessment by the two prominent Russian literary figures: A. S. Pushkin and V. G. Belinskii.

A. A. Chameev is another prominent Soviet Miltonist, whose book *John Milton and His Poem 'Paradise Lost'* (1986) represents the most comprehensive study of Milton's epic in Russian and Soviet scholarship. One of Chameev's articles examines Milton's influence on Byron's poetry (1991); another, co-authored with N. D'iakonova, compares Milton's "Lycidas" with Shelley's "Adonais" (1985). The majority of his essays, however, deal with various aspects of *Paradise Lost*, including the discussion of its lyrical dimension and its genre and compositional originality.



T. I. Paramonova's dissertation *John Milton's Prose of 1640-50s* (1972) remains the authority on the prose works of John Milton. E. P. Bortnik's dissertation on Milton's *Samson Agonistes*—*Milton's Samson Agonistes and English Dramatic Art in the Middle of the Seventeenth Century* (1969)—supplies the only thorough study on that subject. E. S. Maksudova's dissertation *The Language of Translations of the End of the Eighteenth-the Beginning of the Nineteenth Centuries of John Milton's Poem 'Paradise Lost'* (1974) represents the only effort in the exploration of this topic.

Three Soviet critics address the topic of "Pushkin and Milton" in journal articles: R. M. Samarin in 1948, M. I. Gillel'son in 1979, M.G. Sokolianskii in 1989. However, a Russian scholar, V. V. Vinogradov examines this topic as early as 1939 in striving to prove Pushkin's authorship of several notes in the Russian newspaper *Literaturnaya Gazeta* of 1830 on the basis of the author's allusions to Milton. Other comparative essays on Milton and Russian writers include V. T. Oleinik's article "Lermontov and Milton: 'Demon' and 'Paradise Lost'" (1989), and A. S. Ianushkevich's "V. A. Zhukovskii. Reader and Translator of John Milton's 'Paradise Lost'" (1984).

## CHAPTER IV

### POST-SOVIET CRITICISM OF JOHN MILTON (1991-2013)

The present chapter traces the view of Milton held by modern Russian critics of the post-Soviet era, namely A. Chameev, T. Antonova, I. Garin, T. Pavlova, E. Pleshakova, E. Vitkovskii, D. Ivanov, E. Teterina, O. Mos'kina, E. Shashkova, A. Gorbunov, V. Zabaluev, L. Summ, E. Haltrin-Khalturina, and M. Sokolova (in chronological order). These critics are the prominent representatives of the post-Soviet scholarship on Milton, and their efforts furnish a fairly clear picture of the direction in which criticism is headed. Since this post-Soviet chapter identifies and examines Milton criticism which has never before been considered, a detailed analysis of these critics is offered here. Most of these post-Soviet sources on Milton are only available in Russia and not obtainable in the US even through the Interlibrary Loan service, because none of the US or Canadian libraries apparently own them. In fact, most of these Russian sources are not even acknowledged in *any* of the Western library bibliographic databases, including the WorldCat and the MLA International Bibliography. Particularly elusive are the non-circulating post-Soviet dissertations on Milton and the post-Soviet editions of Milton's poetry—one may discover their existence only by getting access to the electronic catalogue of the Russia's State Library (former V. I. Lenin's) in Moscow and that of Russia's National Library (former M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin's) in St. Petersburg

and by browsing Russia's internet bookstores. In addition, modern Russian scholars often participate in local conferences and publish their research papers in conference proceedings, which make them harder to locate, especially if they are printed in the paperback, brochure-like format by Russia's local university presses. Some of the current Russian academics actually translate their articles on Milton into English because they present them at international conferences; however, most of the time, these articles are also published as conference proceedings and thus are not as easy to find even in the West, unless they also appear in an electronic format on the internet.

There are four recent dissertations on Milton (2004, 2006, 2011), which are only available through the Russian State Library. There are several new Russian editions of Milton's works in translation, as well as a new reprinting of the nineteenth-century prose translations of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* by A. Shul'govskaia (2004, 2010), nineteenth-century verse translations of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* by O. N. Chiumina (2011), nineteenth-century prose translation of *Paradise Regained* by Evgeniia Tur (2007, 2008, 2009), and of the nineteenth-century verse translation of *Samson Agonistes* by N. A. Brianskii (2007, 2009). There are also new recent translations of Milton's poetry: *Paradise Regained* by S. A. Aleksandrovskii (2001), *Samson Agonistes*, *Arcades*, "Nativity Ode," "On Shakespeare," and 17 Psalms by T. Iu. Stamova (2006), and "Passions," "On Circumcision" by A. Zuevskii (2006), but no one has attempted a new translation of *Paradise Lost* since the apparently inimitable 1976 Soviet rendering by A. A. Shteinberg. There exists an expensive leather-bound edition of Milton's epics commemorative of his 400th birthday in 2008, published by "Vita Nova" in St. Petersburg, which includes all fifty illustrations by Gustave Dore, and whose cost ranges

from \$100 to over \$1,000, depending on its number and special binding in this limited edition of 1,300 copies. There are also two other costly gift editions of Milton's epics published in 2010 and 2011 by Moscow's "Eksmo" with lavish illustrations by Gustave Dore, William Blake, Henry Fuseli, and the Russian artist K. V. Ol'shanskii.

The twenty-year-old post-Soviet period is mainly characterized by the attempts of Russian critics to rescue Milton's assessment from either socialist or capitalist ideologies, and discover the "true Milton," above all political parties. This was the goal of the most recent biography of John Milton by Tat'iana Pavlova (1997), and Ivan Garin's monograph-length philosophical essay on Milton (1994), issued as a volume in the series *Prophets and Poets*. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, these two literary efforts have been the only book-length biographical treatments of Milton in post-Soviet Russia. The four much more recent dissertations on Milton primarily engage his works rather than his life and touch on the rather familiar subjects in Western Milton scholarship. For example, Elena Teterina (2004) reports on the epic traditions in Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the problem of its specific genre; Oksana Mos'kina (2006) examines the problem of Milton's sources for his early lyrical poems; and Ekaterina Shashkova (2006) analyzes the influence of Greco-Roman heritage on Milton's early lyrical poems and his *Paradise Lost*. The most recent dissertation by Marina Sokolova (2011) investigates the idiosyncrasies of the time-space characteristics of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and also serves as proof that academic interest towards Milton is alive not only in big cities like Moscow and St. Petersburg, but even in Nizhnii Novgorod's universities. Although these research topics on Milton are not new, the fact that doctoral students of post-Soviet Russia choose Milton for their dissertations is significant because

the last Soviet dissertations on Milton were in the late 1960s and early 1970s (E. Bortnik, T. Paramonova, E. Maksudova). Also, the post-Soviet dissertations show much greater awareness of Western scholarship on Milton, which testifies to the wider availability of the English-language scholarship either through the local libraries or the internet in modern Russia. For example, E. Teterina uses John Leonard's 2000 edition of *Paradise Lost* for her analysis, and 75 out of 244 entries (##178-244) in her bibliography are all English-language sources. The rest of the post-Soviet scholarship on Milton consists of numerous articles, most of which are comparative studies of Milton's poetry and the works of English or Russian authors (E. Pleshakova, A. Gorbunov, and E. Haltrin-Khalturina). Some of these articles are papers from conference proceedings, which are almost impossible to obtain in a hard copy at Western libraries, but may be available on the internet website of the Russian conference (D. Ivanov, E. Pleshakova). However, since post-Soviet Russian scholars have become more at liberty to travel abroad, they sometimes present their research in English translation at the Western conferences and then publish it in English-language conference proceedings (A. Gorbunov, V Zabaluev).

I. Garin admits in the opening of his 1994 essay that, as an admirer of T. S. Eliot, he faces a difficult task of reconstructing an unbiased image of John Milton (485). However, the essayist's interest in Milton goes beyond the problem of reconciling his admiration for "the two English geniuses" (487)—his declared mission lies in exposing the traditional portrayal of John Milton by Soviet Miltonists. Garin holds that in the Soviet "industry of culture distortion, no other poet, besides Milton, has been misrepresented to the point of Satanism, to the point of declaring Milton's Satan the poet's mouthpiece" (487). And this is especially disturbing to the Russian critic, who

believes that John Milton is the “English Luther and Calvin, a Reformation enthusiast, who sacrifices his health and life in the struggle with Satanism in a human being” (487). In Garin’s view, to make out of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* revolutionary propaganda is to falsify its meaning—in reality Milton’s epic “is not the creation of rebellious spirit, but a testimony for the doom of rebellion” (489). In fact, all Milton’s literary works are “artistic expressions of Calvinism” (512). Even Milton’s political treatises demonstrate “the triumph of the Bible and Protestantism,” since what Soviet critics traditionally have called the English bourgeois revolution was in reality “a religious war;” the pamphlet war Milton participates in takes place among theologians, not revolutionaries (512). The Soviet myth of Milton as a revolutionary is founded mainly on his prose works, but Garin points out that Milton’s prose “abounds with ecstatic fragments, revealing him as a mystic and a visionary. This is “theological prose,” in which the author compares himself “now to a biblical prophet, now to Teresias” (558-59).

As for *Paradise Lost*, which Garin believes “goes beyond the boundaries of a merely religious epic, since the battle of forces of Heaven and Earth is just a background for the struggle of God and Satan in human hearts,” the epic amounts to a synthesis of secular and theological elements (563). Milton’s epic was conceived as a “gigantic allegorical picture of all times: all past, present and future of the humanity—an eternal history of the battle of Good and Evil on a cosmic scale but within the microcosm of humanity” (564). This layering of diverse historical epochs ensures the complexity of *Paradise Lost* and its contradictory nature, for this epic is “the superimposition of two almost incompatible Miltons—that of pre- and post-Cromwell epochs” (564). This would also explain the ambivalence of Satan’s characterization and the complexity of

Adam's portrayal. The struggle between a poet and a theologian in Milton's mind provides another key to understanding the contradictions of Milton's epic, the work that synthesizes the ideas of its author's entire life (564). In contrast to Soviet critics, Garin holds that *Paradise Lost* signals Milton's realization of "the erroneousness of his path" and his repentance—"a repentance of a sinner, who has participated in the 'great violence' and advocated regicide" (567). This does not mean, however, that Milton has renounced his revolutionary ideals and become a monarchist, but this change occurs as a result of his realization of "how indistinguishable Good and Evil are in real life," which purports his condemnation of "the Satanism of upholding the 'just cause'" (567).

In Garin's opinion, unlike the externally heroic spirit of epics prior to *Paradise Lost*, Milton's poem explores Adam's *internally* heroic spirit and thus is unique in its depiction of world tragedy as "a suffering of human soul" (568), hence the epic's deliberating investigation of Adam's internal world and human psychology. Garin holds that by betraying his creator, Adam nevertheless "performs a noble deed in regard to the woman;" therefore, having been expelled from Eden, he "obtains the right to become the sovereign of his own fate, thus achieving free will" (569). Since the original sin, every human being has the freedom of choosing between God and Satan, and "the entire human history becomes that choice" (569). Consequently, literary critics falsify Milton when they promote Satan to the status of the epic's protagonist and its author's idol. In Garin's view, Milton does not leave any room for doubting Satan's absolute evil—for Milton Satan is "the creator of evil, archenemy, a treacherous hypocrite, posing as a champion of liberty," therefore, in reality, *Paradise Lost* is "one of the most anti-Satanist works in world literature" (575). It is "a book about the meaning of life and fate" and "a hymnal

epic, glorifying England and its culture” (564). Milton is “the main protagonist of his own epic, its invisibly present hero” (568).

Garin further asserts that whether consciously or subconsciously, Milton has invested the characterization of Satan with “the motifs of his personal epic—his rebellion and defeat” (578). The Russian critic believes that the figure of Satan in *Paradise Lost* is “the personification of Milton’s idol of yesterday, Cromwell” (578), and that some of Satan’s statements almost literally reiterate Cromwell’s words, especially his advocating of Charles I’s execution by its “terrible necessity.” Milton has always recognized the tempting nature of sin, but only the negative transformation of Cromwell and the independents in the process of the Reformation totally convinces him in the “might of the forces of Evil,” and in the “difficulty of distinguishing between Good and Evil, in their insidious resemblance” (578-79).

In response to the Western critics’ observation about the bleak nature of Milton’s God, Garin reinterprets Blake’s infamous comment about Milton’s belonging to the Devil’s party, in light of the “difficulty of artistic depiction of the Invisible and the Silent One, who can be revealed only through his Son” (580). This is the reason why Christ appears before us in many representations, whereas God the Father is “totally dissolved in being” (580). Garin evokes Milton’s *Paradise Regained* as a proof for the truthfulness of his argument, for this work is so Puritan in its nature that the falsifying critics of Milton do not show much interest in critiquing it, since the characterizations of Satan and Christ do not lend themselves to such falsification (581). *Paradise Regained* clearly reveals the deep religiosity of its author—“a man, summing up all his Protestant quests” (580). According to Garin, Milton’s Christ is the embodiment of a “new man, a future



sovereign of the world, and Milton himself,” for the poet “has felt Christ in himself and thus endowed Christ of *Paradise Regained* with his own features” (582). In fact, what Miltonists often call “abstractions and religious-moralizing intonations” of *Paradise Regained*, in reality, signals the “final victory of Christ over Satan in Milton’s soul” (582). If the author of *Paradise Lost* “has not yet conquered himself,” the Milton of *Paradise Regained* is a man “who has tamed Satan together with his hero [Christ]” (582).

Unlike Soviet critics, who hold that Milton’s *Samson Agonistes* is a revolutionary piece, Garin believes that its political subtext has been exaggerated. In reality, the tragedy “does not go beyond the limits of the religious issues and all its politics consist in the renouncement of Milton’s own political activities” (582). According to Garin, *Samson Agonistes* is “not about a self-sacrifice for the sake of an idea that has become the meaning of one’s life, or about a heroic feat committed on behalf of the people, but about a man’s ability to remain who he is, even after making all of his mistakes, after experiencing humiliation and slavery” (583). The theme of *Samson Agonistes* is existential and its plot of Samson’s captivity and his last feat is no more than an allegory that hides its author, who is, like his character, “blind, defeated, disgraced, and stigmatizing himself” (584). Samson-Milton realizes his “tragic flaw,” the “erroneousness of his path” and, as a result, “brings down the roof of the temple not on the flower of Gaza aristocracy but on himself” (586). The truth told to oneself about the life spent in vain is what constitutes Samson-Milton’s heroic feat.

Milton’s most recent Russian biographer, Pavlova, considers *Paradise Lost* as another form of Milton’s service, only this time “not to a temporal political struggle or earthly relative justice, but to eternal ideals and divine vocation” (399). Milton’s epic is a

“new Bible, a new Apocalypse, captured in lofty poetic images” (403). *Paradise Lost* is “Milton’s personal victory—a great victory of the humiliated, prosecuted, poverty-stricken blind man over evil spirits that surrounded him on all sides” (422).

Pavlova has no doubt that Milton “advocated people’s rebellion against Charles I’s tyranny and considered the Republic the only just form of government” (419). Therefore, in Satan’s image Milton “condemned not the rebellion itself (for Milton indeed depicts it with enthusiasm), but those mechanisms which had led to it: wicked passions, moral faults” (419). These faults and passions “had distorted the Revolution’s path and led the just cause to moral (prior to historically specific) ruin;” thus, “the reasons for Satan’s rebellion turn out to be the reasons for the Revolution’s defeat” (419). For Pavlova, Satan and the forces that drive him represent “those wicked inclinations in human nature, which had led the leaders of the Revolution to betray its ideals: all the same envy, vanity, thirst for power and world fame, which is inseparable from cupidity” (419). Milton’s Satan emerges as “the first materialist, attempting to persuade man that matter creates itself without God’s interference” (415).

Pavlova points out that Milton’s Christ in *Paradise Regained* restores paradise for man only with his obedience and “not with his redeeming sacrifice on the cross or volunteer suffering, death, and resurrection,” as the Church canon holds it (436). Moreover, Milton’s Christ defeats his enemy only by employing his human and spiritual means, “without resorting to miracles, which would be clear signs of God’s interference” (437). As a result, Milton’s Christ is “more of a stoic than a savior,” and “the meaning of *Paradise Regained* is more ethical than religious” (446). If *Paradise Lost* relates man’s first disobedience, *Paradise Regained* “demonstrates how to withstand temptation and

achieve a victory over Satan not with the help of magical forces, but by means of moral stoicism within oneself” (446). Milton always remained faithful to himself, to his own understanding of virtue, no matter what temptations and difficulties he had to face: “Such path is open to any man; it restores the paradise within—clear conscience and unclouded reason” (446). Milton’s Christ contrasts Satan’s “political schemes and goals” with his “loyalty to ethical principles” (446), thus in a way, with his example, “restoring paradise for man even before his death on the cross and resurrection from the dead” (446).

Although Christ of *Paradise Regained* rejects any political activities, he is not as “passive as some critics suggest”—“the angelic chorus’s call to action is energetic and unambiguous” (446). Christ’s ultimate expression of self-control is another incarnation of Milton’s favorite theme of man’s ability to conquer his passions—a theme that dominates his major poems since *Comus*, for Milton “tamed himself his entire life in private matters (how humbly he accepted Mary in his house after her three year absence!) as well as in public service” (442).

Professor A. N. Gorbunov of Moscow State University is the most prominent Miltonist in post-Soviet Russia. His religious title of deacon and his activism in the church of St. Nicholas in Bolshaia Ordinka seamlessly coexist with his academic life in post-secular Russia (Minney “Preface” 5). In collaboration with his American colleague, Penelope Minney, Gorbunov organized a colloquium devoted to the connections between religion and literature at the Library of Foreign Literature in Moscow in January 1999 (Minney “Preface” 5). The newfound freedom of religion in Russia inspired the papers published as conference proceedings from this event—such a research topic was unimaginable in the officially atheistic Soviet Union. Gorbunov’s 2006 scholarly edition

of Milton's poetic oeuvre was another ideological milestone as it restored *Paradise Regained* to Milton's canon for the first time since the days of tsarist Russia. Gorbunov's original essays at the end of this academic edition that compare Milton with Pushkin, Dostoevskii, and Bulgakov also signal political change since Milton's poetic influence on famous Russian authors was not a topic scholars were allowed to explore due to Soviet ideological rivalry with the West.

According to Gorbunov's comparative essay on Pushkin and Milton, Russian researchers have been fully aware of A. S. Pushkin's high evaluation of Milton's brave character and his inspiring works ever since Pushkin's article "About Milton and Chateaubriand's Translation of *Paradise Lost*" appeared in 1836. Although Pushkin's interest and admiration towards Milton have been acknowledged by many Russian scholars, few of them, however, touched on the subject of Milton's literary influence on Pushkin's works (Gorbunov 648). Gorbunov disagrees with Valentine Boss's conclusion that Goethe's *Faust* was closer to Pushkin than Milton's *Paradise Lost* (648). This may be somewhat true in Pushkin's "A Scene from *Faust*," though even in this work, Pushkin's interpretation of Goethe's Faust and Mephistopheles is completely original, according to Gorbunov (648). Gorbunov is convinced that Pushkin's other works clearly reflect Milton's "great shadow"—a label that Pushkin himself has coined for Milton (648). Already in Pushkin's early poem "Demon" (1823), there is an "evil genius" whose skepticism and pride remind Gorbunov of Milton's Satan in *Paradise Lost*. Then, in Pushkin's "Angel" (1827), this evil genius not only reappears as "the spirit of negation, the spirit of doubt," but looking at the bright angel at the gates of Eden with delight, he realizes that he did not hate everything in Heaven or in the world (649). Pushkin's scene

here surely recalls the two scenes of *Paradise Lost*, when Satan sees tempting Eden for the first time in Book 4, and later when he admiringly stares at Eve in Book 9 (Gorbunov 649).

Gorbunov believes that Pushkin's larger works continue to engage and transform Miltonic themes. For example, in Pushkin's *Mozart and Salieri*, Salieri's wounded pride and envy of Mozart's God-given musical talent resemble Satan's hurt pride and envy of the Son of God's sudden exaltation in Heaven (650). Both Salieri and Satan project their anger and rebel against the seeming injustice of the universe, by ruining lives of their unsuspecting victims: Salieri fatally poisons his friend Mozart, while Satan tempts Eve away from God (Gorbunov 650). In fact, Salieri himself invites such a comparison when he uses biblical imagery and language, calling Mozart a "cherub" who brought some songs from "paradise" to earth, while calling a person who envies "a snake" that eats sand and dust, being "crushed to death by people" (Gorbunov 650). Pushkin's *Mednyi Vsadnik (The Copper Rider)* paints a rather demonic image of the Russian czar Peter the Great, which reflects Pushkin's own dual attitude towards his ruler—a positive reformer and builder of Russia's capital, but at the same time a willful, proud tyrant, who persecutes anyone daring to rebel against him like Evgenii (650). Thus, Peter the Great comes across not only as a builder of a great empire, but also as a Satan-like destroyer, even an Antichrist (Gorbunov 651).

Gorbunov insists that Milton's influence on Pushkin, especially of his *Paradise Lost*, is particularly evident in Pushkin's novel *Kapitanskaia dochka (The Captain's Daughter)*—a literary connection that has yet to be noticed by critics. Both works, though written in different genres, portray a rebellion "senseless and merciless," in

Pushkin's words, that is doomed from the beginning and is a cause for human tragedy (Gorbunov 651). In both the epic and the novel, the rebel, though not a protagonist, is such a titanic figure that he eclipses all the other characters: Milton's Satan and Pushkin's Pugachev share a similar Romantic image of a lonely hero, uprising against the status quo and breaking the traditional boundaries of good and evil (Gorbunov 652-53). Pushkin's characterization of Pugachev as a demonic, satanic navigator starts from the beginning when he appears out of nowhere during the chaotic snowstorm with his black beard and sparkling eyes. Then, it is reinforced with Petr Grinev's "prophetic" dream about the black-bearded man with the ax who curiously replaces his sick father in bed (653). Like the Romantized version of Milton's Satan, Pugachev's character has a duality: on the one hand, he is pure evil, whose hands are red from the blood of the innocents on the path of his rebellion; on the other hand, he can be generous, brave, insightful, and even noble when he saves young Petrusha's life and helps him with his love interest Masha Mironova (Gorbunov 653). Pugachev's favorite tale about an eagle and a raven, where an eagle prefers a shorter life on a diet of live game to a longer life of a raven on a diet of dead flesh, characterizes his own life of preying on human blood like an eagle, or rather like a raven, according to Grenev. For Pugachev, like for Milton's Satan, good and evil have become hopelessly mixed together, and a degree of fatalism emerges (Gorbunov 654-55). Both Pushkin and Milton, through their multidimensional characters of Pugachev and Satan, illustrate the undeniable charisma of evil and its pleasant appearance, which makes the boundaries of good and evil even less discernable for the non-vigilant (Gorbunov 653-54). In fact, Pushkin admits to "believing the Bible in

everything regarding Satan,” while pondering the paradoxical attractiveness of evil (quoted in Gorbunov 654).

As a leader, Pugachev, not unlike Satan, gets so carried away in his rebellion that he becomes its “slave” and a catalyst of an unstoppable bloody chaos (Gorbunov 655). However, unlike Satan’s revolt of cosmic proportions and against God, Pugachev’s uprising is “social” and “against earthly government” (Gorbunov 654). Gorbunov strongly disagrees with V. G. Belinskii’s famous assessment of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* as an “apotheosis of rebellion against authority,” and does not view Pushkin’s novel as a glorification of rebellion either (655). Gorbunov believes that in this late work, there is a tension between the young Pushkin’s love of freedom and the mature Pushkin-statesman’s views, not unlike in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, which makes the character of Pugachev so vivid and multifaceted (655). Gorbunov insists that the mature Pushkin is very far from idealizing the Russian rebellion, which his own choice of the negative epithets for the Pugachev rebellion in the novel—“senseless and merciless”—already makes clear (655).

Besides the parallels between Pushkin’s Pugachev and Milton’s Satan, Gorbunov notices a connection between the main protagonists of the Russian novel and the English epic—Petr Grinev and Masha Mironova and Adam and Eve. Both couples progress from innocence to experience and share a “pastoral oasis” where their love flourishes—Eden and Belogorsk’s fortress, respectively (Gorbunov 656). Both couples undergo trials and learn from the bitter fruit of knowing good and evil, finally finding “a paradise within,” that is only possible when Reason governs the human will (Gorbunov 657). Like in a novel of manners and in a historical novel, the married protagonists in *The Captain’s*

*Daughter* and in *Paradise Lost* mature and “find happiness in a patriarchal utopia of kind feelings and family joys” towards the end of the story (Gorbunov 656-57).

In another comparative essay, Gorbunov realizes that a literary comparison between Milton and Dostoevskii is a rare event in academe, because these two authors are so different in many ways, including in their styles of writing, their worldviews, their ideological and religious interests, not to mention the two-century gulf that separates them, evident in Milton’s use of the Ptolemaic universe in *Paradise Lost* (658).

Moreover, Milton is the last great epic poet in Western Europe, while Dostoevskii is a prose writer of the greatest novels of the nineteenth century. Finally, Milton was an indefatigable Protestant, whose radically unorthodox Christian beliefs have been labeled as heresies, whereas mature Dostoevskii was a Russian Eastern Orthodox Christian, who “viewed Protestantism as a false religion that leads people away from the Truth” (Gorbunov 658). Gorbunov also admits that although Dostoevskii was probably familiar with Milton’s *Paradise Regained* in one of several Russian translations already available, he most likely did not base his “The Legend about the Great Inquisitor” from *The Brothers Karamazov* on Milton’s poem (658n1). Nevertheless, Gorbunov believes that a comparative study of these two works can be productive, because both writers use the same biblical plot of the temptation of Christ in the desert that appears in the Gospels of the New Testament, and tracing the similarities and differences between these authors’ interpretations can yield interesting conclusions (658).

Gorbunov holds that it is unfortunate that both Milton’s *Paradise Regained* and Dostoevskii’s “The Legend about the Great Inquisitor” are often analyzed by critics as independent and even self-sufficient works, which makes them lose some of their



meaning and context, since they are an integral part of each author's larger plan (659). Thus, Milton's *Paradise Regained* is unbreakably connected with *Paradise Lost*, completing the first epic and developing further its theme of "justifying the ways of God to men" (Gorbunov 659). Gorbunov believes that Milton's view of history allowed that "the expulsion of the first people from Eden presumed the possibility of their return to paradise due to the deed of Christ" (659). Similarly, the disobedience of Adam is redeemed by the obedience of Christ, a new Adam, but whose moral choice becomes easier only because he has already obtained true freedom by voluntarily submitting his own free will to the Will of God the Father (Gorbunov 665). That is why *Paradise Regained* should only be considered in the context of the first epic, which makes it clear why Christ rejects Satan's temptations so easily, without any doubts or an inner struggle—a fact that often results in undeserved negative criticism for Milton (Gorbunov 664). Likewise, Dostoevskii's "The Legend about the Great Inquisitor" is only a chapter of his novel *The Brothers Karamazov*, and therefore, is tightly woven with the rest of the work. Ivan Karamazov, like the biblical Job, questions the justice of the universe and puts God on trial in his "Legend," thus explaining his worldview to his brother Alesha, who raises his own counterarguments along the way, which "justify the ways of God to men." Both Milton and Dostoevskii attempt a theodicy to reconcile the existence of evil and human suffering of the innocent with the goodness of God (Gorbunov 659-61). Although Milton chooses the Gospel of Luke as his source of Christ's temptation in the desert, whereas Dostoevskii prefers the Gospel of Mathew, both writers make the temptation of power over all of the kingdoms of the universe the most crucial one in their works, despite the difference in the order of the three temptations (Gorbunov 663).

While Milton's *Paradise Regained* stages Satan's three attempts at tempting Christ away from God in the desert sand of Palestine, Dostoevskii does not recount the same biblical events of the New Testament, but instead has the Great Inquisitor attempt to "correct" the deed of Christ, by providing his own answers to the three questions of the "Spirit of self-destruction" in the sixteenth-century Seville among the fires of Inquisition (Gorbunov 663-64).

In both Milton's brief epic and in Dostoevskii's novel, the first temptation of Christ to turn stones into bread is aimed at more than merely satisfying his physical hunger after a very long fast, but as a ploy of instilling doubts in Christ about God's Providence. The Inquisitor wants to lift the "burden of freedom" that Christ's deed has brought to people, arguing that in reality, people are terrified of such freedom, finding it "unbearable," and would gladly give it to those who will feed them in return (Gorbunov 665). According to the Inquisitor, if Christ agrees to turn stones into bread for the people, they will follow him like grateful and obedient "cattle," though forever anxious that his hand may stop making bread. Here, like in his letter of 1876, Dostoevskii probably criticizes socialism as a new religion that tries to replace Christ and Heavenly bread with science and earthly bread (Gorbunov 665). Gorbunov believes that Dostoevskii turned out to be a prophet, who foresaw the ideological "catastrophes of the twentieth century," such as militant-police socialism, fascism, and Islamic fundamentalism—totalitarian governments whose goal is to turn people into such obedient and grateful cattle, into hunger-satisfied slaves, who will no longer hunger after the Truth, having abandoned their "spiritual beginning" and freedom in their trade of the Heavenly bread for the earthly bread (666).

The second temptation of Christ in Dostoevskii's novel appears as the third and last temptation in Milton's *Paradise Regained*, when Satan takes Christ to the pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem. Since in Milton's brief epic, Christ's faith in and obedience to God make the miracle of his standing on the pinnacle of the temple possible, Dostoevskii's Inquisitor hopes to "correct" the miracle of Christ's faith by replacing it with "earthly" magic or "pseudo-miracles" of the Antichrist that would instill awe in people and enslave them once again (Gorbunov 667-68). The Inquisitor realizes that people need more than bread only, and thus, in order to obtain people's freedom, one must "calm their conscience" as well, using the three forces of "miracle, secret, and authority." According to Gorbunov, Christ chose not to jump from the pinnacle of the temple precisely in order to reject these three forces and leave people the freedom of choice (667). Even the Inquisitor admits that Christ chose not to descend from the Cross because he did not want to enslave people's freedom of conscience with a miracle, preferring their voluntary, miracle-free faith in him instead (Gorbunov 667). All of the three forces—miracle, secret, and authority—resorted to by the Inquisitor, are based solely on the earthly, human sources of power that not only deny, but usurp God's authority by redefining the established norms of sin and virtue and determining the new rules of morality that have nothing to do with the Bible (Gorbunov 668).

Although the third temptation of Christ varies in order between the two authors, Gorbunov firmly believes it to be the most important and challenging, as well as the central temptation for both works, because it is the longest of the three temptations in Milton's *Paradise Regained* (668). Since Milton's Christ rejects the power and fame of all of the earthly kingdoms, including the wisdom of the Greek civilization dear to Milton

and not found in the Gospel, Dostoevskii's Inquisitor attempts to "correct" Christ's deed by offering an alternative, earthly kingdom where people will be happy by force, "under the threat of the sword" (Gorbunov 670). Moreover, the Inquisitor declares that unlike Christ, he has agreed to Satan's offer of the power and fame of all of the earthly kingdoms "eight centuries ago," when he "took Rome and the sword of Caesar," probably implying the pretensions of the Roman Catholic Church to world primacy, but Alesha remarks that what the Inquisitor has obtained is not all Rome, but only "the worst from Catholicism, the inquisitors, the Jesuits" (Gorbunov 669). Unlike Christ's love of the individual, the totalitarian regime of the Inquisitor's promised kingdom betrays his hate of people behind his showy demagoguery of alleged love towards them, because it strips away people's individuality, dignity, and the spiritual origin of their freedom for the sake of a "common and agreeable anthill" of people (Gorbunov 669-70). If Milton's brief epic creates a utopia of an ideal man's conduct, whose will completely coincides with God's Will, then Dostoevskii's Inquisitor fancies an anti-utopia of human society, reduced to an anthill of hardworking and obedient insects, who even cry and laugh based on the order from above, not knowing the biblical norms of good and evil (Gorbunov 670-71). Although, technically speaking, there is no Satan among the official protagonists of Dostoevskii's "The Legend," the Great Inquisitor, while surviving in the desert in his youth, rejected Christ and accepted Satan, thus becoming the champion of his views, which aligns him with Milton's Satan, especially since the ninety-year old man also has eyes that shine with fiery sparks (Gorbunov 672).

Unlike the dialogical nature of Milton's *Paradise Regained*, with its eloquent debate between Jesus and Satan, Dostoevskii's Christ is completely silent to the

Inquisitor's rhetoric, but his silence is so meaningful that it still "drives the logic of the Inquisitor's speech," with his questions and his own answers to them (Gorbunov 673). Gorbunov believes that one of the reasons for Christ's silence is his being the embodiment of God's love that "does not need words" and forgives everything, which can also explain Christ's sudden, silent kiss of the ninety-year old Inquisitor in reply to the latter's artful rhetoric at the end of "The Legend" (673). Christ's unexpected kiss on the Inquisitor's aged, bloodless lips has such a profound effect on its recipient that the old man suddenly lets his prisoner go, despite his earlier intention of burning him (Gorbunov 673). Hence, paradoxically, Ivan's story originally intended as a stern judgment of God, instead turns out to be a praise of Jesus against the storyteller's will, as his brother Alesha points out (Gorbunov 674). According to Gorbunov, both Milton and Dostoevskii show that although evil is strong, it is not almighty and can be defeated by good (674).

Apparently for Gorbunov, the labels "Jesus" and "Christ" are perfectly interchangeable, because he does not seem to make a distinction between Milton's "Jesus" and Dostoevskii's "Christ," calling Milton's protagonist mostly "Christ" in *Paradise Regained* as well, even though the Russian translation he quotes from is true to Milton's original usage of the name. This annotation, however, follows Gorbunov's usage to reflect his preference. Also, in the very first note to his comparative article, Gorbunov mentions that although Dostoevskii does not seem to refer directly to Milton's *Paradise Regained* in his works, letters, rough notes, or articles, he does make references to *Paradise Lost* (658n1). Unfortunately, however, Gorbunov does not quote these references or provide any specific citations for them, thus leaving the reader exasperated and wanting to know more about Dostoevskii's direct references to Milton's first epic.

Although Bulgakov's last novel *The Master and Margarita* has received a lot of critical attention, including a very detailed analysis of its various sources, Milton's poetry is usually never mentioned among them to Gorbunov's surprise, expressed in his comparative essay on Bulgakov and Milton (675). Gorbunov believes that Bulgakov, being born into the intelligent, professorial family, and having received a good, pre-revolutionary education, most likely read Milton in childhood or youth (675). In those days, Milton, together with Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe, was on the compulsory reading list of the great Western European poets for any educated man interested in literature like Bulgakov. It is also possible that Bulgakov did not deliberately contemplate Milton's works right when he was writing his *Master and Margarita*, but his memory may have recalled them unconsciously (Gorbunov 675). In addition, Bulgakov could have known Milton's poetry indirectly from its Romantic interpretation both in Russia and in the West (Gorbunov 675). In either case, Gorbunov believes that there are parallels between Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita* and Milton's epics, and thus they should be explored.

While Bulgakov's Voland seems to resemble Goethe's Mephistopheles in appearance and speeches, especially due to Bulgakov's own choice of the epigraph from *Faust*, ultimately, Voland does not take after any of the previous artistic images of Mephistopheles in literature, theatre (Charles Gunod's opera, Shaliapin), or sculpture (M. Antokol'skii). There is a certain "dialectic of attraction and repulsion" between Bulgakov's Voland and his older, less perfect incarnations in art that testify to his existence in the past. Bulgakov skillfully plays on these earlier and familiar models to create his own version of Satan, as well as his own interpretation of good and evil, that is

very different from that of the New Testament or that of Goethe (Gorbunov 676).

According to Gorbunov, Bulgakov's Voland resembles Milton's Satan in his "absolute" and "tyrannical" power in the dark, evil world of shadows (676). Only if Satan is the sole ruler of the cosmic Hell and the fallen angels, Voland's kingdom is the earthly hell of our "sublunary world," primarily of Stalinist Moscow (Gorbunov 677).

Gorbunov believes that Bulgakov was likely familiar with the notion of evil as the absence of good, as "the imperfect, false being" due its removal from God, the primary source of good, and that this view found its way into his *Master and Margarita* (677). Stalinist Moscow with its Great Terror and godless five-year plans, which aimed to destroy the religion in the USSR, comes across in the novel precisely as such "absurd being, removed from the primary source of good—God" (Gorbunov 677). There is no "spiritual light" in a country, where most of the population consciously stopped believing "the fairytales about God": instead, Milton's "darkness visible" rules "the absurd, satirist world of Stalinist Moscow," where "material interests have completely subordinated and replaced the spiritual ones" (Gorbunov 678). Bulgakov's Voland, like the biblical Satan from the Book of Job, judges his Muscovites throughout the novel, by exposing their love of money, obsession with the "apartment question," and other material concerns (Gorbunov 678-79). The unusual heat of spring-time Moscow already likens it to Hell, and "MASSOLIT" located in "The House of Griboedov," "despite its pretensions to gather the 'engineers of human souls,' in reality, represents the center of anti-spirituality, where the falseness of being is evident in its full satirical might" (Gorbunov 679). Here, everything is turned upside down: the writers are driven only by a single, "earthly desire to live like human beings," and a talent is determined by the holding of a document

(Gorbunov 679). When midnight strikes, jazz music and dancing begin at this place, and the dancers resemble “marionettes” and even shades, “lacking a third dimension,” and thus, in their parodic version, foreshadowing Voland’s satanic ball of real shades (Gorbunov 679). Bulgakov mixes these two planes of his narrative into one fantastic dimension, so that the boundaries between this world and that of the afterlife become unclear, other than the fact that Hell rules both worlds (Gorbunov 682).

Like Milton’s fallen angels in *Paradise Lost*, who quickly adapted to their new environment of Hell, following their usual propensities, Bulgakov’s Voland and his crew felt right at home in Stalinist Moscow, making fun of its inhabitants and their material greed and utter nihilism (Gorbunov 680-81). Not unlike the Pandemonium of Milton’s Satan, Voland’s magic palace, erected in the apartment number 5, boasts a luxury of columns, chandeliers, fountains, swimming pools, and even a tropical forest with parrots. Both Milton and Bulgakov create a kind of parade of the Hell’s inhabitants, only in *Paradise Lost*, they are the fallen angels with the names of the pagan gods, whereas, in *The Master and Margarita*, Hell’s members are “people, or shades that used to be people, and now resurrected from their ashes for one night of merriness a year” (Gorbunov 682). At the beginning of the novel, Berlioz claims, in his conversation with Ivan Bezdomnyi, that Jesus Christ as a person has never existed and that all of the stories about him are pure fiction and myth, while Voland is eavesdropping as a “foreigner.” Joining the conversation, Voland, stealthily looking around and in low voice, then inquires if Berlioz and Ivan do not believe in God either, and Berlioz confirms that not only are they atheists, but are openly so, because atheism does not surprise anyone in their country. Much later in the novel, at his ball, Voland makes fun of atheist Berlioz, who has been



decapitated and whose head now rests on the dish plate, but whose eyes are very much alive and full of thought and suffering. Voland rubs in the inaccuracy of Berlioz's theory about the end of one's human life with one's decapitation, while Berlioz's own still alive head and other present guests of the ball seem to serve as the poignant proof of the contrary theory. However, Voland punishes Berlioz by having him become exactly what he believed in—nothing (Gorbunov 680).

Bulgakov's Master and Margarita are the only protagonists of the novel who are real, "three-dimensional" people, lacking any grotesque features in this "darkness visible" (Gorbunov 682). Unlike the other characters, both protagonists seem devoid of material interests and opportunism, and instead, are completely loyal to their proclivity: Master is dedicated to his writing, while Margarita is immersed into feeling. The "unspiritual" members of the House of Griboedov predictably make fun and reject Master's novel about Pontius Pilate that is full of spiritual questions of being (Gorbunov 682). No wonder that Master is so "lonely and helpless" in the material society of Bulgakov's Moscow, where he clearly does not fit in with his non-compromising attitude. According to Gorbunov, Bulgakov's Margarita is the embodiment of "earthly femininity that combines feeling, compassion, and selfless love," and thus resembles Milton's Eve and Dante's Francesca more than Goethe's Grethen, who is rather the "embodiment of eternal femininity" (683).

Gorbunov argues that there are parallels between Milton's works and Bulgakov's novel in the "New Testament" part of *Master and Margarita* as well, because "darkness visible" rules both capitals, and Pontius Pilate's Ershalaim shares the same "merciless totalitarian regime" with Stalinist Moscow (684). Only if, in the Moscow section of the

novel, Bulgakov adopts a “prism of fantastic grotesque” to expose Stalin’s tyranny, in Ershalaim, he can show Pilate’s cruelty without such euphemism (Gorbunov 684). However, the main parallel between Bulgakov’s “New Testament” part and Milton’s epics materializes in the image of the protagonist Ieshua Ga-Notsri, whose Aramaic variant of Jesus’ name must have been chosen by Bulgakov in order to “juxtapose his own protagonist with the biblical Jesus from Nazareth” (Gorbunov 684). According to Gorbunov, Milton’s Son of God in *Paradise Lost*, who is clearly subordinate to God the Father in the Holy Trinity, and his Christ in *Paradise Regained*, who does not remember his exaltation in Heaven and confirms his Messianic vocation only at the end of the poem, demonstrate anti-Trinitarian and Arian characteristics of Milton’s unorthodox Christianity, theorized in his *Christian Doctrine* (685). Similarly, Bulgakov “goes even further than Milton” in his radical interpretation of Christ, by casting doubt even on the accuracy of the Gospels (Gorbunov 685). The wandering philosopher Ieshua Ga-Notsri complains about Levii Matvey, who follows him everywhere and seems to write down his words continuously on a parchment. However, Ieshua once gets a closer look at what the parchment records and realizes to his horror that Levii Matvey either misunderstands him or copies him wrong, creating great confusion of his teachings for his future readers. Bulgakov’s version of Christ does not have any disciples or followers besides Levii Matvey, and nobody recognizes Ieshua as a Messiah when he enters Ershalaim on foot (Gorbunov 685). Ieshua is completely alone and does not seem to know his parents either, unlike the biblical Christ “whose lineage descends from King David, confirming his Messianic status” (Gorbunov 685). Both Bulgakov’s Master and Ieshua are “lonely and helpless” in the novel because they are incapable of compromising their beliefs:

Master treasures his freedom of creating true art, while Ieshua defends spiritual Truth (Gorbunov 685).

Gorbunov considers a “theme of flight” another parallel between Bulgakov’s novel and Milton’s first epic. In *Master and Margarita*, there are two flights: Margarita’s joyous flight above the springtime earth that symbolizes her inner liberation, and the last cosmic flight of Master and Margarita on the black horses of Apocalypse together with Voland and his crew (Gorbunov 687-88). The two protagonists’ flight through Cosmos reminds Gorbunov of Satan’s flight through the sea of Chaos in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, because both flights are “fate-making”: Satan’s perseverance through Chaos delivers him to Earth, where he can materialize his evil plans, whereas Master and Margarita’s flight through Cosmos delivers them to “eternal rest” (688). In Russian Eastern Orthodox Christianity, eternal rest is inseparable from Heavenly Kingdom, but Bulgakov separates the two notions, granting his Master only eternal rest, outside of Heaven, because, in Levii Matvey’s words as Ieshua’s messenger, “he has not earned the light of Heaven, [but] he has earned rest” with his novel about Pontius Pilate (Gorbunov 688). There are various theories about why Master does not go to Heaven and what kind of “rest” he is granted by Voland, but Gorbunov agrees with the critical opinion that Master seeks help from Voland rather than God and thus forever connects his fate with the satanic force (690). It is also possible that as an autobiographical character in many ways, Master does not go to Heaven because Bulgakov did not believe that he himself deserved Heaven and hence only dreamt of rest (Gorbunov 690). Gorbunov also contemplates and compares the very different fates of the two people in the novel who both write about the same protagonist Ieshua: however, unlike Master, Levii Matvey is granted the light of Heaven,

despite Ieshua's own allegation that he has distorted his teachings while recording them on the parchment (690). Master's novelistic portrayal of Ieshua more as a "human god" rather than the "Divine Messiah" of the Gospel of Matthew, could have negatively impacted the outcome of his fate (Gorbunov 690-91). Gorbunov believes that Master's earned rest will be "active rest" of a laboring writer in the "quiet atmosphere of free art," denied him in life, where he will be visited by the "characters of his books" (689). Although Master's new eternal home is not in the Kingdom of Heavenly light, it is already outside of, or rather, "on the boundaries of 'darkness visible,'" with the promised sunrise (Gorbunov 689). If Master's home is located in Limbo, the first circle of Dante's Hell in his *Divine Comedy*, as some critics suggest, then Master is in great company of ancient poets like Homer, Virgil, and Ovid (Gorbunov 690). However, Gorbunov laments, "from now on, Master will always write into the absolute darkness of his writing desk, and no one besides Margarita will be able to appreciate his writing" (690).

Although Gorbunov acknowledges the connection of Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita* with the Gnostic teachings, he questions the degree of influence that Gnostic dualism has on Bulgakov's view of events in his novel, thus doubting that God has completely abandoned Stalinist Moscow and Ershalaim of *Master and Margarita* (691). Instead, Gorbunov perceives the penetration of Heaven's rays of light through the "darkness visible" of Moscow's life, since without them many events of the novel would be impossible, such as human compassion that is self-admittedly not in Voland's area of expertise, but that is felt by the spectators of the Variete and Margarita towards several characters, including Pontius Pilate (691). Likewise, the miracle of cruel Pontius Pilate's sudden love and the miracle of his forgiveness at the end of the novel, as well as the love

between Master and Margarita, would not be possible without Heaven's light (Gorbunov 691). Moreover, Gorbunov argue that "Master's art, where light shines, even if its rays are merely reflected," would not be possible (691). There is also another light that illuminates both Bulgakov's novel and Milton's epics, creating the last parallel between their works—the "light of inspiration" that the blind author of *Paradise Lost* considers "the gift from Heaven" (Gorbunov 692). According to Gorbunov, "With the help of this light, Bulgakov has penetrated the 'darkness visible' of Moscow and Ershalaim" (692).

As its title suggests, Gorbunov's essay "Poetry of John Milton (From the Pastoral to the Epic)" surveys Milton's life and works, by showing the English poet's journey from the pastoral genres to the epics, in the footsteps of his much admired predecessors Virgil and Spenser. This largely biographical piece first appeared a year earlier in the textbook titled *History of the Seventeenth Century Foreign Literature* that Gorbunov co-edited with N. T. Pakhsar'ian and N. R. Malinovskaia in 2005, and thus was probably originally intended for that purpose rather than as a scholarly article.

E. V. Vitkovskii's piece titled "The Return of Paradise" serves as an afterword to S. A. Aleksandrovskii's 2000 Russian verse translation of Milton's *Paradise Regained*—the first new translation of this brief epic since Imperial Russian times. This monumental occasion reminds Vitkovskii of his own similar contribution to the field of literary translation towards the end of the Soviet period: his 1988 Russian translation of the Dutch playwright Joost van den Vondel's trilogy *Lucifer* (1654), *Adam in Exile from Eden* (1664), and *Noah* (1667). Vitkovskii's translation was published in the series of "Literary Monuments" to commemorate Vondel's 400<sup>th</sup> birthday (1587-1679), while Aleksandrovskii's translation was intended to celebrate Jesus Christ's 2000<sup>th</sup> birthday,

which explains the translator's choice of Milton's brief epic as the subject matter. As a translator and close reader of Vondel's plays, Vitkovskii cannot help but notice similarities between *Lucifer* and *Paradise Lost*. Moreover, Vitkovskii insists that Milton's *Paradise Lost* "begins exactly where Vondel's *Lucifer* ends" (161). If Vondel's trilogy ends with the salvation of virtuous Noah and the promise of the coming of the Savior for the future generations, then Milton's "dilogiia" ends not merely with the coming of the Savior, but with His last rejection of Evil and of conversation with primal Evil's representative (169). Vitkovskii believes that Milton was familiar with Vondel's *Lucifer* and *Adam in Exile*, and wonders what kind of poem and on what theme Milton would have created without knowing Vondel's *Lucifer* (161-62). What Hugo Grotius's Latin play *The Exile of Adam* (1601) had done for Vondel, Vondel's *Lucifer* (1654) did for Milton, by serving as an inspiring idea for new, original embodiments of the same theme (Vitkovskii 161-62).

As an epigraph to his essay, Vitkovskii chooses the tragically murdered Russian Father Aleksander Men's words "There are words in the Bible that are thrown in as if by chance" (154), which become the focus of his own essay, because both Vondel and Milton are able to create entire plays and epics based solely on a few such words in the Bible. Since the Bible is mostly devoted to topics of God, Man, and Salvation, the explanations for the nature and origin of Evil, Satan, and the Anti-Christ are scarce and scattered. Theoretical debates about such theological questions provoked civil wars on the one hand and created great poetry on the other (Vitkovskii 160). In Vitkovskii's view, the themes of Evil and the victory of Good over Evil have found their greatest embodiment only in the seventeenth century—in Vondel's and Milton's works. To

make Lucifer or Satan a protagonist was a daring act for a God-fearing writer since “the thought that by describing Satan’s actions and his shameful defeat, one may actually help praise God, belongs to the Reformation” (Vitkovskii 157). That is why medieval Dante’s Lucifer frozen to his waist in the lake of Hell is a “repulsive” and “ultimately episodic” character (Vitkovskii 156).

Vitkovskii argues that “Milton’s *Paradise Regained* is not simply an epic poem about Jesus Christ—it is a direct continuation of *Paradise Lost*, where the main protagonist was nevertheless Satan; it is precisely about Satan’s temptation of Jesus Christ in His earthly life that this book tells us” (163). Only *this* Satan is very different from the imposing image of Vondel’s Lucifer and the titanic stature of Milton’s own earlier image of Satan in his *Paradise Lost*. Unlike for his first epic, Milton did not have much material at his disposal for composing *Paradise Regained*, especially since there is only one place in the Bible where Satan appears in person (Vitkovskii 164). According to Vitkovskii, both of Milton’s epics show us that “Satan cannot withstand God, he cannot withstand God’s army, and after the coming of Jesus Christ to earth in human flesh, he cannot withstand Man either” (169).

During the Soviet rule, there appeared a new and amazing translation of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, which was published twice. In contrast, *Paradise Regained*, “a poem more about God than a demon, was not translated or published to be on the safe side, apparently following the logic that one should not talk about God much: what does not exist should not be talked about, and consequently, it is better not to talk about God or He may start existing somehow” (Vitkovskii 163-64). Vitkovskii concludes that even though Vondel was a Dutch Catholic and Milton was an English Protestant, they share the same

century in their lives and the same theme in their works, regardless of expressing it in different languages.

In her essay, intriguingly titled “In Unapproachable Light” (undoubtedly suggested by Milton’s phrasing “in unapproached light” in Book 3 of *Paradise Lost*, which in turn must have been inspired by the biblical “in unapproachable light” from 1 Timothy 6:16), Liubov’ Summ is faced with a difficult task of composing a prefatory article on Milton that would introduce the Russian edition of the English poet’s works in pre-Soviet and Soviet translations. Although Summ does not mention the edition presently at stake, she provides an interesting perspective on Milton as she compares his poetic achievements to those of his predecessors Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Tasso. Summ shows how Milton draws inspiration and identifies with various blind poets, but at the same time chooses to be original, by creating unexpected twists to the traditional genres and characters. For example, Milton settles on a Hebrew character from the Bible for his drama *Samson Agonistes*, who has free will and loses his sight in the fight for his tribe without receiving anything in return, instead of a typical blind character like Greek Edipus, who is a pure victim of his fate (Summ 8). Relating to blind poets, prophets, and seers who have the gift of inner vision, Milton also views Samson as his “prototype”: like Samson, Milton lost his sight serving his country as a publicist and Latin secretary (Summ 8). Thus, unlike Homer, Milton chooses a Greek *play* with a *biblical* hero rather than an epic genre with a mythological hero to talk about his blindness (Summ 8).

Summ argues that “The necessity to return to the original, primary source of the genre, idea, human history is the main theme of Milton’s poetry” (10). Since Puritans like Milton believed that one should read the Bible in the original rather than listen to its



interpretation by preachers in the Church, accurate translation of the Bible from dead languages becomes a religious conviction and the only way to get to the original source (Summ 9-10). Similarly, for aspiring poets like Milton, “imitation, quotation, and translation” of exemplary Greek, Roman, and Italian epics and drama was also the only way to reach the initial, “primal source” of the genres (Summ 12). Both Homer’s and Virgil’s elaborate epic similes pale in comparison with Milton’s “anachronisms,” for which he was sometimes criticized as well (Summ 11-12). Homer’s flat disk-like epic world seems tiny and mostly two-dimensional in comparison with Milton’s created world, which is much more spacious and four-dimensional: it includes not only the God-created universe and the infinite space outside its limits, where Satan and his crew are exiled, but also the measurement of time, with its cause-and-effect chain (Summ 13-14). Homer’s epic time is mostly cyclical, without a true beginning (14). Summ even compares Homer’s and Milton’s epic worlds in the terminology of physics: as the speed of light is superior to the speed of sound, so is Milton’s poetic creation to that of Homer (13). After Virgil founds historical time in his epic, Dante creates a “strictly hierarchical, three-dimensional world of Hell-Purgatory-Paradise,” with Hell underground, while Milton more wisely places Hell outside of the universe’s limits, since “at the moment of Satan’s exile from Heaven, Adam has not yet sinned, and thus Evil has not yet entered the God-created world” (Summ 14).

Satan’s inability to understand the notion of historical time in both of Milton’s epics is repeatedly expressed in his lack of knowledge about the cause-and-effect sequence of events: he wonders “if Man has already been created or only will be created, if Man has already been endowed with God’s image or will be so glorified later, if the

coming of Christ heralds the definite end of Evil's rule on Earth or not so immediately, etc." (Summ 15). According to Summ, "Satan finds himself outside of the four-dimensional space-time," and his attempts to enter it often fail, which is further symbolized by his snake image with its two-dimensional, cyclical space-time properties, reminding us of the "snake-ocean with the tail in his mouth" circling the flat-disk world of the ancient Greeks (15). Milton insists on the presence of teleological time in Eden by making its present goal-oriented: Adam's and Eve's daily labor and nightly pleasures are also designed for the future, as the garden with its harvest is maintained for the sake of their offspring as well (Summ 16). Unlike Dante, Milton makes Eden rather than Paradise the "top-tier of the three-tiered hierarchical world" (Summ 16). Moreover, Milton's Eden is different from Paradise in structure as well: it is a "square on a round Earth," which symbolizes the X and Y axes rather than a cycle or infinity (Summ 16).

Summ disagrees with the critics like Belinskii, who believe that Milton's poetic gift outshone his religious beliefs, which would explain why Satan turned out to be a more attractive character than God in his *Paradise Lost*. Instead, Summ attempts to explain that in Milton's time, "no one even conceived of juxtaposing God and Satan as equals" (16). Summ proposes the notion of Evil not as something independent, but as misunderstood, misguided Good, since Satan's formerly good qualities become evil, as a result of their being distorted and misdirected by his revolt against God and violation of existing hierarchy (17). Likewise, work, rest, sex, and abstinence can be good or bad, depending on very subtle differences, such as their motivating reasons, goals, and interdependence with other matters (Summ 17-18). For example, the actual act of sex between Adam and Eve may be identical in purely physical terms before *and* after the

Fall, but postlapsarian sex becomes sinful due to its intentions, location, accompanying words, and surrounding circumstances (Summ 18).

Based on the title of the poem, its “central event is the loss of life in Eden,” when the first earthly couple is no longer faced with the prospect of an eternal life, but with an earthly existence that has a beginning and an end, a future and a past (Summ 18). Free will and consequences of each action make world history, which is shown in *Paradise Lost* several times and from various perspectives. The beginning and the end of the poem are juxtaposed as “divine-human history” and Satan-human history, depending on human cooperation with God or Satan. For example, Book 1 enumerates the fallen angels that will become false idols of the future generations, thus creating “history from the Devil” (Summ 18). Satan’s “exile” from time becomes particularly noticeable in Book 3 when Satan views Earth from above and sees only emptiness, while Milton names future countries on those geographical spots. The same world history is presented to Adam by the angel in a different perspective at the end of the poem—from Eden’s “earthly height” (like by Satan to Jesus from the mountain top in *Paradise Regained*), because “history, the fruit of cooperation between God and Man, should be considered by Man within the parameters of the Earth and not from some outer limits” (Summ 19). The divine-human history has not only time (from the Fall to salvation), but a spatial dimension to it as well: Adam sees kingdoms of the world that turn out to be neighbors on the plane, even though they exist in different centuries, not coinciding on the axis of time (Summ 19). In Book 3, Milton’s image of Jacob’s ladder with the descending and ascending angels connects not only Earth and Heaven, but also different levels and epochs of the world, thus symbolizing the unfolding of history from God to Man (Summ 20). There are three

seemingly separate historical perspectives in Book 3—Devil’s, Man’s, and God’s—where Satan attempts to make history in the emptiness based on his own devilish plan; Man has not understood the connection between seemingly unrelated events; while in God’s perspective, the future may arrive even before the present, as when Christ in advance volunteers to take the blame for Man’s potential disobedience.

Summ argues that Adam’s and Eve’s disobedience of God’s decree is a result of two separate acts of choice, committed independently from one another (21). Although she seems to blame Adam and Eve equally for the Fall, Summ points out that, in a chivalrous gesture, Adam could have shared the blame without having to violate God’s prohibition, just as Christ was able to take human sin without disobeying God the Father (21). In conclusion of her essay, Summ laments her difficult task of having to paraphrase Milton’s deep thoughts, which can only result in a departure from his true meaning, from the “Light that he has approached” (23). As an answer to blind Milton’s prayer for Heavenly Light in Book 3, the beginning of all beginnings was revealed to him, where God’s omniscience and omnipotence descend to Man not to diminish, but to empower him (Summ 23). Unfortunately, in her otherwise insightful essay, Summ makes a mistake when she indicates Milton’s century as the “sixteenth” century and his death year as “1676” (7).

As the title of his conference paper suggests, D. A. Ivanov argues that Milton has revealed the features of a “new man” of his own time in the protagonists of Adam and Satan in *Paradise Lost*. According to Ivanov, “Biblical myth, modernity, and the eternity expressed in the Christian doctrine are all woven together: mythological character, modern, ‘historical’ man, and universal human nature have been combined in Milton’s

poem into one epic image, clarifying and completing one another” (1). In his time, Milton had only two literary styles to choose from—Baroque and Classicism, so he methodically embodied them in his protagonists, such as Satan and Adam, respectively (Ivanov 1). Although Ivanov admits that the mixed stylistic nature of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* is by now a well-known fact in Milton criticism (e.g. A. Chameev), he believes that he is the first critic to prove this theory on the example of Adam’s and Satan’s consciousness (1).

Characters from Baroque literature usually lack the ability to understand their place in the world and in God’s plan, and as a result, their willful actions in this dream-like life bring harm to themselves and others around them. Ivanov insists that Milton follows this Baroque model so closely that even Lucifer, one of God’s most rational creatures, becomes its embodiment in his willfulness (1). As the chief Archangel, Lucifer should have realized the futility of his attempt to rebel against the omnipotent and omniscient God, but instead he acts blindly, as if he is in some other illusory world, where he believes that he can wrestle with God as His equal, as his proud speeches in Books 1-2 indicate (Ivanov 1). The tragic irony of Satan’s character consists in his ignorance: believing that he is fighting with his Creator, in reality, he is like a puppet, merely playing a role assigned to him from above. For Ivanov, Satan is the only character from *Paradise Lost* whose vagueness makes him so hard to define: all of his three main roles (Archangel Lucifer, Prince of Darkness, and Satan-Snake) do not exhaust his identity and do not derive from one another (2). Satan is a great pretender, wearing various masks and resemblances, typical of Baroque literature.

In contrast to Satan, Adam is created by Milton based on the literary model of Classicism with its rational core, because he is fully conscious of his sense of duty towards God and the tragic potential of his disobedience when he nevertheless decides to doom himself together with Eve in the Fall (Ivanov 2). The tragic irony of Adam's situation lies in the fact that his perfect knowledge of how he should act still does not help him fulfill his duty, not unlike Racine's Phaedra (2). Ironically, Adam's awareness of the true nature of his relationship with his Creator results in his extreme "self-consciousness" and loneliness that severs him from the "organic connection with the world, characteristic of the Middle Age and Renaissance characters" (Ivanov 2). Hence on the example of his epic's two protagonists, Milton demonstrates the "historical, modern features of a man from his own time," whose psychological complexity and spiritual quests require not one but two different literary styles to be fully expressed. Milton also shows that there are some deep similarities between Baroque and Classicism despite their more obvious differences: although Adam and Satan are enemies, they share an "autonomy of being" by living within the "framework of the new mechanical-atomic image of the world, where every being becomes only a tiny part lost in the limitless space of the universe" (Ivanov 2-3). Both Adam and Satan choose to go against God's will, based on their experience, and "this disparity between their atomic will and the compulsory moral law ends tragically" (Ivanov 3). Seventeenth-century literature, while revealing the secret of Man's individuality, often forces him to overcome it at the same time (Ivanov 3). Hence the problem of free will can be resolved in two ways: Man can choose to stay true to himself and thus fall and suffer, or he can sacrifice his own will by submitting it to the higher law and thus, in reality, stop being himself (Ivanov 3).

Both Baroque and Classicism demonstrate the tragedy of human existence, by denying one's individual will in favor of the compulsory moral law: Baroque gradually forces protagonists to obedience through the Hell of one's rebellious soul, while Classicism immediately confronts Man with the clear realization of the necessity to reject one's ego (Ivanov 3). Ivanov concludes that "From the moral perspective, both Baroque and Classicism equally reject one's individual will, but the fact that one's atomic, individual 'I,' though in its negative connotation, becomes accessible to the understanding of the seventeenth-century author, proves that Milton in his poem paints a new historical reality—a man of the seventeenth century, a man of the modern time, essentially a new man, previously unknown to the Western European culture" (3).

E. V. Haltrin-Khalturina's article, commemorating the quatercentenary of Milton's birth, analyzes Miltonic themes in Coleridge's *Christabel*, by treating both *Paradise Lost* (1674) and the published version of *Christabel* (1816) as two famous diptychs of the English literature. Elena Haltrin-Khalturina concedes that Milton's epic has been compared with Coleridge's poem before, but notes that those previous attempts were brief and mainly focused on their common theme of the Fall of Man (24). Haltrin-Khalturina insists that her essay investigates the echoes between Milton's and Coleridge's poems in much more detail, paying attention not only to their thematic, but also to their structural similarities as two-part compositions called diptychs. Likewise, it has been customary to assume that the English Romantics only admired the first books of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, where Satan successfully wears the mask of an epic hero (24). Haltrin-Khalturina argues that the fully comic description of Satan's descent on the Chain of Being by Milton in the middle and at the end of his poem also generated many

imitations from the Romantic poets like Coleridge. Milton's *Paradise Lost* combines the theme of temptation and the rhetoric of courtly poetry that particularly influence the second part of Coleridge's *Christabel* (26).

According to Haltrin-Khalturina, the two-part composition of *Christabel* is almost symmetrical in its structure where the first part seems to mirror the other part, which is atypical for traditional English or Scottish ballads (28). The first part of *Christabel* opens with the midnight crowing of the rooster and paints night mirages, full of female images and Southwestern England's hilled landscape. Christabel's innocent soul undergoes temptation by the supernatural forces and is comforted by her deceased mother in a sweet dream at the end of Part I, demonstrating the harmonious relationship between a mother and her child (28). The second part of *Christabel* opens with the morning funeral tolling of the bell and depicts a courtly spirit, full of male images and Northern England's Lake District landscape (28). Christabel's father Sir Leoline and his bard Bracy are the main protagonists of Part II that ends with the not-always-harmonious relationship between a father and his child (28). Such symmetry and balance of the poem's two parts (night and day) give it a sense of unity and completeness, which would have been disrupted by any further development of the plot by Coleridge (28). Hence Haltrin-Khalturina argues that *Christabel* is a finished poem: a story of the Fall of Christabel's soul that first loses the ability to pray and then to speak under the influence of Geraldine's demonic forces (29).

Similarly, Milton's *Paradise Lost* is a developed two-part composition, where the first 6 books are narrated by the poet to the laity or even the non-believers, while the last 6 books are narrated by the archangels Raphael and Michael to Adam and Eve (Haltrin-Khalturina 31). By starting his poem with events understandable even to commoners



who are not educated in the theological debates and rather prefer special effects, Milton first immerses his readers into the adventurous plot and then gradually enlightens them with the Christian discussions, thus bringing them closer to the Bible with each book (30). For example, in the first part of his epic, Milton teaches his readers to develop vigilance and independence of thought in the face of Satan's eloquence by giving the same story of the war in Heaven in two completely different versions—from Satan's perspective (Books 1-2) and from Archangel Raphael's mouth (Books 5-6). If the first part of *Paradise Lost* begins with the erection of the Pandemonium, Satan's palace and Hell's capital, then the second part (Book 7) starts with God's creation of the world (31). The first 6 books focus on the Fall of angels, whereas the last 6 books are devoted to the Fall of Adam and Eve. This symmetrical two-part organization of *Paradise Lost* is united by the plot thread of Satan's attempt to commit revenge against God for his Fall and to turn Man, God's last creation, against his Creator (30).

Haltrin-Khalturina traces four Miltonic themes that are of special interest to Coleridge and that find a new, Romantic interpretation in his *Christabel*: the attraction of the demonic characters towards "materials dark and crude"; the descent of Satan and other sinners along the Chain of Being; the sinners' consequent loss of their "intuitive" reason and weakening of their "discursive" understanding; and the concept of "fortunate fall" (31). She also uses the presence of these Miltonic themes in *Christabel* as her evidence that Coleridge intended his poem either to remain in its present form, ending with Christabel's materialized Fall and an expectation of a happy ending, or if elaborated, with Geraldine revealing all of her demonic features before her eventual exile and the restoration of order in the castle (Haltrin-Khalturina 36).

Haltrin-Khalturina suggests that Milton shows the demonic protagonists' inclination towards "materials dark and crude" in various ways: during the war in Heaven, Satan and his crew choose low matter as their armor and ammunition; in Pandemonium, Mammon's defense of low matter is met with applause from the other demons; and Satan's incestual passion toward Sin is yet another instance of his attraction towards everything crude and low (31). Likewise, after Satan's successful temptation of Eve, the fallen angels' punishment further reveals their dependence on low matter as they periodically turn into hungry snakes craving beautiful apples that become ashes in their throats (Haltrin-Khalturina 31).

For Haltrin-Khalturina, another leading theme of *Paradise Lost* concerns the discussion about the hierarchical Chain of Being that ascends to God, the Creator of the Universe (31). Archangel Raphael's explanation of the Chain of Being to still unfallen Adam and Eve in Book 5, who still have their prelapsarian capacity to use intuitive reason together with the angels, is communicated much more easily than Archangel Michael's visions of the future to the fallen couple in Books 11-12. Here Milton uses Aristotle's concept of the anatomy of the soul to demonstrate the drastic change in human nature after the Fall (Haltrin-Khalturina 31-32). Unlike the fast-paced Fall of Eve that shows her immediately breaking all Ten Commandments and Seven Deadly Sins right after her tasting the forbidden fruit, the consequences of Satan's Fall are presented gradually as he turns himself into various animal shapes. However, these seemingly voluntary metamorphoses in reality signal Satan's inevitable descent along the Chain of Being as he visually regresses from a young cherub in Book 3, to a cormorant, a tiger, a lion, and a toad in Book 4, to finally a river mist and a snake in Book 9. In Book 10,

Satan can no longer control his metamorphosis as he turns into a hissing snake in the middle of his triumphant speech about Adam and Eve's Fall to his crew, who also become snakes—a memorable scene that is mentioned by Coleridge as a reminiscence at the end of *Christabel*'s Part II (Haltrin-Khalturina 33).

According to Haltrin-Khalturina, Milton's theme of *felix culpa* or "fortunate fall" determines the optimistic ending of his *Paradise Lost*: before exiling Adam and Eve from Eden, Archangel Michael shows Adam the visions of future history where the first human couple's distant descendants will eventually be able to defeat the snake and return to God (33). However, postlapsarian Adam and Eve's present exile is necessary for their own good, because it is dangerous for them to remain near the Tree of Life or they could immortalize their imperfections and misery with the taste of its fruit (Haltrin-Khalturina 33). Structurally, Adam and Eve's exile in Book 12 balances the end of the first part of the epic, where Raphael tells about the fallen angels' exile from Heaven in Book 6. Although Satan succeeded in tempting Man away from God, his revenge does not result in expected consequences, because Adam and Eve are not doomed forever for their sins, but instead they begin a long path to redemption, which can actually lead Man to a higher level of spiritual development than that of the first human couple (Haltrin-Khalturina 33). Although some English Romantic poets, such as Byron and both Shelleys, preferred to describe catastrophic Falls that do not lead sinners and sufferers to salvation, both Blake and Coleridge insisted on the idea of the "fortunate fall" in their poetry primarily under the influence of Milton. In depicting the story of the temptation and Fall of an innocent human being, Coleridge's *Christabel* resorts to popular Christian themes and rethinks

famous Miltonic formulas according to the aesthetics of Romanticism (Haltrin-Khalturina 33).

Like Milton, Coleridge is interested in the theme of one's attraction to low matter as a symptom of the soul's corruption (Haltrin-Khalturina 34). In *Christabel*, Geraldine embodies the bodily in all its extreme and low (pain, rape, exhaustion, passions, disintegration), and all of the characters who come into contact with her catch her inclination to the bodily, becoming blind and deaf to the spiritual, just like Christabel and her father Leoline do (Haltrin-Khalturina 34). Christabel's distancing from the truly spiritual begins already with the first line of the poem when, missing her departed fiancé, she, a Christian, suddenly decides to go to an oak in the forest for a prayer in a heathen, Druidic manner, which appropriately results in a nightmare rather than a blessed vision (34). Haltrin-Khalturina argues that in the character of Geraldine, Coleridge combines the Romantic iconography of nightmare (i.e. Henry Fuseli's *Nightmare* [1781]) with the theme of demonic attraction to low matter, so well-expressed by Milton in his monsters like Sin and Hell Hounds (34). Similarly, Coleridge chooses Milton's model of Satan's gradual metamorphoses to develop his theme of the sinners' descent along the Chain of Being by also stretching it out in time on the example of Christabel, who, in the end, can no longer control herself and her body, becoming a snake (Haltrin-Khalturina 34). If in the beginning, Christabel chooses to avoid a correct interpretation of the alarming events during the night and even the next morning, then in the end, she completely loses her will and cannot call things by their true names. Christabel does not tell the truth to her father about her sense of horror at the sight of Geraldine's nakedness; she fails to warn her friends about two-faced Geraldine's insidiousness; and when she finally attempts to

express her concerns openly, she feels defeated by the wicked witch Geraldine's fierce, hypnotizing stare and thus starts hissing instead of talking—an unmistakable echo of the famous interrupted speech of Milton's hissing Satan-snake to his legion in Book 10 (Haltrin-Khalturina 34).

Haltrin-Khalturina believes that Milton's discussion about "discursive" and "intuitive" reason in Raphael's mouth finds a particularly Romantic interpretation in Coleridge's hands, especially influencing the then popular differentiation between the aesthetic concepts of "imagination" and "fancy" (34). Coleridge seriously contemplates these notions in Chapters 13-14 of his *Biographia Literaria* (1817), consulting Kant on this topic and quoting Milton's Raphael from Book 5 of *Paradise Lost* in the epigraph to Chapter 13 (Haltrin-Khalturina 34-35). In Milton's thought, angels only use intuitive reason, while prelapsarian Adam and Eve can occasionally use intuitive reason, but mostly resort to discursive reason. After the Fall, however, intuitive reason is completely lost to humanity and even discursive reason is weakened. In Coleridge, these "three levels of creative consciousness" correspond to "fancy," "primary imagination," and "secondary imagination," though focusing only on the human capabilities (Haltrin-Khalturina 35). According to Coleridge, human beings on the lower levels of development resort to fancy when creating mental images, and only later learn how to use their primary imagination (35). Secondary imagination becomes accessible only to spiritually developed people, such as prophets and poets (35). *Christabel's* Part II was finished at the time when Coleridge was actively thinking about the differences between these aesthetic notions, and therefore, materialized them in his poem, by juxtaposing Bracy's prophetic consciousness (secondary imagination) to Sir Leoline's clouded

consciousness (fancy) in their dialogue about Bracy's prophetic dream (Haltrin-Khalturina 35). Poetical Bracy is the only character in the poem who does not lose his Christian convictions and his ability to interpret events correctly with Geraldine's arrival to the castle. While Bracy's prophetic dream reveals all the events in Christabel's life since the previous night and identifies all of the protagonists (Christabel as the suffering dove, and Geraldine as the snake strangling the dove), Leoline insists on a different role distribution (Geraldine as the dove seeking a shelter from her persecutors—the snake) (35). Leoline can usually rely on his primary imagination and thus properly receive the correct interpretation of Bracy's prophetic dream, but under Geraldine's influence, he becomes capable only of fancy, which mechanically reorders the fragments of the heard prophesy and consequently distorts its meaning (35). Bracy's true dream not only increases dramatic tension in the poem, but also exposes the degree to which Christabel's and Leoline's spiritual vision has been dulled by Geraldine's presence (35).

However, like Milton, Coleridge resorts to the theme of “fortunate fall,” by not condemning his protagonists to eternal suffering, but instead introducing the idea of reconciliation at the Conclusion to Part II, which gives hope for the happy ending of all events in *Christabel* (Haltrin-Khalturina 35). Such inevitability of a happy ending in the face of seeming hopelessness (Christabel and Sir Lionel can no longer withstand Geraldine's sorcery, and Bracy is exiled from the castle) testifies to the existence of a higher good that eventually defeats Milton's Sin and Death and Coleridge's Geraldine (35). Christabel's Fall is not the tragic end of her life's events—it is only a step on her long path to redemption and self-improvement. The two-part form of the diptych proves necessary and convenient for showing various contrasts, such as the states of innocence

and sinfulness, a voluntary self-deceit and a distorted worldview (Haltrin-Khalturina 36). The two parts also have a cause-and-effect relationship: in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the Fall of Satan and his crew (Books 1-6) becomes the reason for their revenge to God and their temptation of Man (Book 7-12), whereas in Coleridge's longest poem, *Christabel*'s conduct leads not only to her own misadventures (Part I), but causes the temptation of the castle's other inhabitants (Part II) (36). Although Coleridge was a very careful reader of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, he created his own story of one's Fall—as a Romantic, he treats the story of an individual soul's Fall rather than the biblical myth. If Milton creates allegorical characters of Sin, Death, and the Hell Hounds, then Coleridge's poetic method is more subtle: for example, he only invites the reader to recall the “palfrey white” horse symbolizing a “nightmare” in Henry Fuseli's paintings, and he shows *Christabel*'s descent along the Chain of Being as her gradual departure from reality for the world of illusions (36). Thus, Haltrin-Khalturina concludes, old Miltonic themes find a new, Romantic incarnation in Coleridge's *Christabel*.

Elena Teterina's dissertation, titled *The Epic Traditions in John Milton's "Paradise Lost" and the Problem of Its Genre Specificity* (2004), represents the first official post-Soviet dissertation on Milton after a long thirty-year pause and evidently prompts the writing of three other dissertations on Milton within the next seven years. Teterina's dissertation was defended at the Moscow State Open Pedagogical University named after M. A. Sholokhov, and consists of Introduction (pp. 3-17), three chapters, Conclusion (pp. 149-52), Endnotes (pp. 153-76), and Bibliography (pp. 177-91). Teterina's bibliography contains at least sixty-seven English-language sources (##178-244) and even some of the Russian-language primary and secondary sources are foreign-

authored, but simply translated into Russian and thus given in their Russian transliteration. Chapter 1 (pp. 18-35) of Teterina's dissertation treats Milton's perception of the epic genre (pp. 18-24) and his "epic consciousness" as an author of *Paradise Lost* (pp. 25-35). Chapter 2 (pp. 36-74) examines the genre content(s) of *Paradise Lost*, such as the epic legend in the poem (pp. 36-42), the "epic chronotop" (pp. 43-74), the epic event (pp. 75-78), the epic plot (pp. 79-85), the system of characters (pp. 86-98), the principles of individual characterization of characters (pp. 99-108), and the "epic collision" (pp. 109-14). Chapter 3 (pp. 115-48) analyzes the genre structure of *Paradise Lost*, such as the epic composition (pp. 115-20), the principles of the epic narration (pp. 121-34), the form of interaction with the reader (pp. 135-39), and the epic style (pp. 140-48).

The goal of Teterina's dissertation is to determine the specific genre of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and to reveal its main "genre-forming factor"—epic traditions. Teterina argues that Milton's *Paradise Lost* is "a traditional epic poem—a work that represents a concrete historical period of perception, mastering, transformation, and development of the epic traditions of his predecessors on the levels of its genre content and structure" (16). Finding previous studies on the subject rather limited to *external* similarities and differences between *Paradise Lost* and other famous epics, Teterina pays attention to *theoretical* questions about the concepts of "genre," "epic tradition," and "epic poem," apparently lacking in previous scholarship (7-8). Teterina uses a historico-typological methodology, considered necessary by the Russian genre theorists for analyzing epics (A. Veselovskii, E. Meletinskii, B. Putilova, and V. Gatsak) (7), by comparing Milton's *Paradise Lost* to its numerous epic predecessors, from *Beowulf* to Spencer's *The Faerie*



*Queen*. This way, Teterina hopes to solve the “problem of genre specificity” of *Paradise Lost* and the “place, function, and purpose of Milton’s use of many-centuries-long epic traditions” in his long epic (149). In identifying the research novelty and theoretical significance of her dissertation, Teterina notes not only her application of a historico-typological methodology to *Paradise Lost*, but also her analysis of Milton’s epic through the prism of such categories as “genre,” “epic,” and “tradition” (16), theorized by G. Hegel, M. M. Bakhtin, N. Frye, E. Hirsch, H. Jauss, and C. Bowra, among others. Teterina also uses Z. N. Volkova’s notion of “chronological aspect” that shows the movement of the epic tradition and its manifestation on a new cultural-historical turn (15).

In her Introduction, Teterina laments seventeenth-century critics’ “anti-historical” approach to *Paradise Lost* that insists on the existence of an ideal, classical epic model. According to Teterina, those critics who note some major differences between *Paradise Lost* and the epics from other historical epochs either widen the semantical field of the concept of “epic poem” to make it applicable to *Paradise Lost* or classify it as belonging to lyrical or dramatic genres (4). To determine the place of *Paradise Lost* among the epics of various epochs in terms of its absorption and continuation of epic traditions, Teterina locates the “constant” components of the epic genre in *Paradise Lost* and explains the reasons for the existence of Milton’s variations on various levels of genre contents and structure that differentiate his epic poem from the previous epics (16). Teterina concludes that epic traditions shape the genre of *Paradise Lost*, while Milton, in his turn, also transforms and develops the content(s) and the structure of the epic genre, but within the resilient boundaries of this ancient genre (152). Milton’s contribution to

the renovation of the epic genre content(s) includes his use of the biblical material for an epic plot, his widening of the limits of the biblical myth of the Fall by his incorporation of the world's mythological and literary funds and his modern re-evaluation of the ancient myth in light of his time's aesthetic needs, and his original choice of a "sad task" (9.186) for a epic event (Teterina 150-51). Teterina also mentions Milton's widening of the spatial coordinates of the epic narration by the inclusion of the additional areas, his enrichment of the meaning of various topos by the creation of a symbolic plane, and his blurring of the boundaries between the absolute epic past, present, and future against the background of the universal battle between the Eternal and the temporal (150-51). Milton's clear identification of "superheroical" and "anti-heroical" (anti-historical) categories, caused by the spiritual polarization of the seventeenth century, leads to a larger presence of Godly and infernal planes in the poem, as compared to previous epics (Teterina 151). Teterina argues that Adam is the epic hero of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (137)—an individual adequate to the ethical and aesthetic ideals of the seventeenth century, making Milton's choice quite original (151).

On the level of the epic genre structure, Milton's *Paradise Lost* exhibits an increased manifestation of the epic narrator's individuality, a clear orientation towards the maximum activity of the reader's reflexion, and a stylistic use of neologisms, prosaisms, dialectisms, and special lexicon, as well as the figurative elements of the Baroque and Classicism (Teterina 151).

Teterina's dissertation is so heavy with theoretical terminology and quotations from Russian and foreign genre theorists that it becomes almost a weakness, as her own voice sometimes gets lost among the critical cacophony of piled-on quoted material and

citations—something that A. A. Gugin, her research adviser, should have pointed out to his student.

The second post-Soviet dissertation on Milton is authored by O. V. Mos'kina and is titled *John Milton's Early Poems: the Problem of Their Sources* (2006). It was directed by Professor A. N. Gorbunov—a leading Miltonist in modern Russian academia, who co-edited with Russian translator T. Iu. Stamova a Russian edition of Milton's works the same year. Mos'kina's dissertation was defended at the Moscow State University named after M. V. Lomonosov, and consists of Introduction (pp. 3-18), three chapters, Conclusion (pp. 194-201), and Bibliography (pp. 202-16). Mos'kina's bibliography contains many English-language sources on Milton. Chapter 1 of Mos'kina's dissertation analyzes Milton's *Nativity Ode* and its sources (pp. 19-67); Chapter 2 examines the sources of Milton's poem-diptych "L' Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" (pp. 68-130); and Chapter 3 treats Milton's funeral elegy *Lycidas* (pp. 131-93).

Mos'kina concedes that *Paradise Lost* is Milton's most significant contribution to world literature, but also insists that his early lyric poems composed in the period of 1626-1638 are of special interest to literary history, because they reflect the most important stages of the poet's creative evolution, which is impossible outside of the context of the English poetic tradition, represented by Chaucer, Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton's other literary predecessors (3-4). Milton's attitude towards tradition is a controversial and contradictory matter, since on the one hand, he is an iconoclastic experimentator, rethinking and breaking the established genre and stylistic canons, while on the other hand, he underlines the connection of his own works with those of his great predecessors, calling Edmund Spenser his best teacher and himself—Spenser's poetic

inheritor (avtoreferat 3). Likewise, in “To Shakespeare” and “Il Penseroso,” Milton emphasizes the important role of William Shakespeare’s works for his own poetry, as his numerous allusions to Shakespeare in his other early lyrical poems also indicate (Mos’kina avtoreferat 3). Among other authors that the allusions and hidden quotations in Milton’s works reference are Ben Jonson, Giles and Phineas Fletcher, William Drummond, Michael Drayton, William [*sic.* George?] Chapman, and Joshua Sylvester.

Although Milton’s connection with the previous literary tradition, regardless of whether it serves as a source of inspiration or an object of rethinking, is one of the most important aspects of Milton’s works, it has not been much researched in either Western or Russian literary studies (Mos’kina 3-4). Instead, modern scholars pay attention to Milton’s own influence on future literature, while the problem of Milton’s sources, for his early poetry in particular, has been rather overlooked—Mos’kina’s dissertation hopes to fill this particular void in Milton scholarship (4). Mos’kina’s research also contributes to the growing field of intertextual studies, although the author is very cautious of labeling her endeavor as part of the modern theory of intertextuality and prefers instead the label of “intertextual interaction,” because she believes that the application of the theory of intertextuality can only be justified for the analysis of post-modern texts (4). The application of the concept of “intertext” to the works of Renaissance and Seventeenth Century “cannot be substantiated, since it contradicts the notion of artistic creation of that period and leads to the leveling of the author-subject, as well as to the excessive modernization of the work itself” (Mos’kina 4). Therefore, Mos’kina uses more appropriate terms for her study of Milton’s sources, such as “influence,” “continuity,” and “adoption” (4). For Mos’kina, “a reconstruction of literary connections

and the quest for sources of such large-scale authors as Milton and Shakespeare, whose works reflect all of the leading tendencies of their contemporary art, is an important step in the creation of the history of national literatures and the description of the literary tradition of a given country or epoch” (4).

In her effort to reconstruct the literary and cultural connections of Milton’s early lyrics with the texts from different epochs (from antiquity to Milton’s time), Mos’kina covers “various areas of Western culture from poetry and painting to alchemy and theology”—a wide range of sources which she considers lacking in existing scholarship on her topic (3). The theoretical methodology of Mos’kina’s dissertation is based on the works of R. Barthes, J. Kristeva, and H. Bloom, as well as on the theories of M. M. Bakhtin and many other Russian critics. In her study, Mos’kina employs a historico-cultural method combined with close reading, comparative, and linguistic analyses.

Mos’kina analyzes Milton’s sources for his early poetry on the level of ideas, imagery, genre, and style (194), which helps her classify them into most important and occasional influences. Among Milton’s key sources, Mos’kina lists the Bible, ancient (Greco-Roman) mythology and literature, Shakespeare, Spenser, and, to a lesser degree, Jonson, while the “melancholic” poems by Nicholas Breton and John Dowland can serve as examples of secondary or only occasional sources for Milton (198). Mos’kina classifies and differentiates among the terms “quotation” (open, implicit or paraphrased), “allusion” (hidden reference), and “reminiscence” (unconscious, out-of-context borrowing) (15), as she locates examples for each term in Milton’s early poetry. Having determined that allusion is Milton’s most common form of reference, Mos’kina identifies biblical, mythological, literary, political, and geographical allusions (199-200). What

Mos'kina calls "intermedial allusions" enables her to widen Milton's sources beyond literature to music and visual art, such as the Renaissance books of emblems, the Western European iconography of Nativity, and the artistic tradition of representing Melancholy, launched by Albrecht Durer (200).

Milton's *Nativity Ode* (1629) interacts with the Bible in two ways: directly by quoting biblical passages and indirectly by referencing poems that contain biblical allusions (Mos'kina 21). Being one of Milton's first English poems, *Nativity Ode* is closely connected with Latin "Elegy VI" that "serves the function of a poetic preface" to it, according to Mos'kina (29). Virgil's "Eclogue IV" (32) and Ben Jonson's masques (66) are among the sources that Mos'kina identifies besides the Bible. The royal rhyme of Milton's *Nativity Ode* also connects it with other works written in this versification and high style, such as Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*, and Spenser's *Four Hymnes* (Mos'kina 43). Milton's allusions to the ancient authors (Virgil, Ovid, and Hesiod) and his invocation to the Muse in *Nativity Ode* also create associations with epic texts and "underline the scale and importance of Milton's chosen theme" (41). In fact, Mos'kina points out that unlike traditional Nativity poems of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that were written in "an intimate, chamber tone," Milton's *Nativity Ode* stages Nativity as "an event of universal proportions, as a turning point in the history of humanity" (41). Similarly, Milton uses Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* to illustrate the ideas that his own poem's main event (Nativity) rejects (Mos'kina 45).

Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" (1631?) are more secular and have lyrical tendencies characteristic of Spenser and Johnson, as well as features of a pastoral

poem, an emblem, and a nocturne (Mos'kina 68). Like his *Nativity Ode*, Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" have not only lyrical, but also dramatic sources, such as masques (68). Regardless of whether one considers "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" two contrasting sides of one's personality, two masques of the author, or representatives of two different temperaments, Milton's twin poems are connected with contemporary essays, dramaturgy, medical and psychological thought, as well as with the tradition of portrait art, especially coupled and double portraits (Mos'kina 69). An instance of "an intermedial allusion" is the connection of "Il Penseroso" with the allegorical portrayal of Melancholy initiated by Albrecht Durer's *Melencolia I* (1514) (69-70).

Mos'kina argues that "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" are much more than just an illustration of the theory of humors or yet another example of a melancholic protagonist suffering from a fashionable disease—they are Milton's remark "in the literary dialogue of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries between scientists and poets, dramatists and philosophers on the theme of 'a Renaissance man'" (73). The poetic world of "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" becomes a mosaic of quotations and allusions to works ranging from Shakespeare's plays to John Florio's *Italian-English Dictionary*, without losing its artistic unity (Mos'kina 73). According to Mos'kina, the influence of Spenser's *The Faerie Queen* and his other works on Milton's "L'Allegro" is particularly noticeable in the genealogy of Melancholy and Euphrosyne, but Shakespeare's influence overtakes the poem, once L'Allegro starts describing his passing of time and daily entertainment (101). In fact, lines 22-44 of "L'Allegro" is an elaborated catalogue of Milton's allusions to Shakespeare that creates a pastoral setting.

Milton's mention of pastoral cliché names, such as Corydon and Thyrsis, deliberately alludes to Virgil's eclogues and Elizabethan pastoral poems, and his use of folklore motifs associates "L'Allegro" with Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*. The influence of the English masques on Milton's "L'Allegro" is felt in such typical figures of "Laughter" and "Jollity" present in Ben Jonson's masque *The Vision of Delight* (1640) and the Graces (Mos'kina 95). "L'Allegro" has shifts from courtly tradition to pastoral mode and back to allusions to Spenser's works, while "Il Penseroso" is much more consistent (Mos'kina 127).

Mos'kina also points out another "intermedial allusion": a connection of Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" with the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century collections of emblems and symbols, especially with the iconography of such characters as "Contemplation" and "Jollity"--"Allegrezza" from Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1593) may have been an influence on Milton's naming of his L'Allegro (Mos'kina 96). Compared to his "L'Allegro," Milton's "Il Penseroso" is less mosaic with various allusions to individual works—it alludes to entire schools of thought in philosophy, literature, and aesthetics, such as the ideas of Plato and Hermes-Trismegistus about mysticism and alchemy and the concept of God's hierarchy in the universe by Marsilio Ficino and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (Mos'kina 127).

Among Milton's sources for his *Lycidas* (1637), Mos'kina lists Theocritus's *Idylls* and ancient pastoral elegies by Virgil, Bion, and Moschus, as well as the Western European elegies by Sannazaro, Castiglione, and Spenser (197). Milton's *Lycidas* also alludes to Shakespeare's plays and Elizabethan lyrical poems by Spenser, Giles Fletcher, Jr., and Michael Drayton, especially in the catalogue of flowers mourning Lycidas



(Mos'kina 167). Since Milton widens the traditional genre of pastoral elegy by enriching it with the biblical theme of salvation (132) and the Christian rethinking of the pagan myth about Orpheus (176), the Bible and the works by the Renaissance theologians also enter the list of Milton's sources for his *Lycidas* (Mos'kina 173). Milton's fruitful transformation of the pastoral elegy in *Lycidas* revived the genre by breathing a new life into it, and thus made possible the creation of such future masterpieces as Shelley's *Adonais*, Arnold's *Thyrsis*, and Tennyson's *In Memoriam* (Mos'kina 193).

In conclusion of her dissertation, Mos'kina concedes that the hierarchy of Milton's most important sources can vary and depends not only on the particular stage of his creative evolution, but also on the theme and imagery of each work. For example, Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" do not really have any biblical allusions, while *Lycidas* does not have any real allusions to Ben Jonson, even though most of Milton's other early poems are unimaginable without Jonson's influence (Mos'kina 198).

The third post-Soviet dissertation on Milton is written by E. S. Shashkova and is titled *The Influence of Greco-Roman Heritage on John Milton's Works: The Case Study of His Early Lyrical Poems and His Poem "Paradise Lost"* (2006). Directed by Professor V. E. Solodovnik, Shashkova's dissertation was defended at the Moscow State Provincial University, and consists of Introduction (pp. 4-20), three chapters, conclusion (pp. 172-85), bibliography (pp. 186-202), and two appendices consisting of tables (pp. 203-14). Shashkova's bibliography contains many English-language sources on Milton, some of which are surveyed in more detail in her Introduction. Chapter 1 of Shashkova's dissertation sheds light on the historic-literary context of John Milton's works (pp. 21-44); Chapter 2 explains the functions of ancient Greco-Roman imagery in Milton's early

lyrical poems (pp. 45-85); and Chapter 3 considers ancient Greco-Roman literature as the foundation of Milton's poetry in general and reveals ancient influences in Milton's *Paradise Lost* in particular (pp. 86-171). Appendix 1 (pp. 203-06) is a chronological table of events that brings together historical situation and Milton's biography in two columns side-by-side. Appendix 2 (pp. 207-14) provides an original, alphabetized statistical analysis of the frequency of Milton's use of ancient Greco-Roman imagery in his examined works.

Shashkova's goal is to discover the meaning of ancient Greco-Roman heritage for Milton and its role in shaping his poems' structure, as well as in expressing his world outlook. As a result, Shashkova carefully examines the various functions of ancient heritage in Milton's early works and *Paradise Lost* and thus traces the gradual evolution of these functions. Unlike earlier studies on the subject, Shashkova's dissertation draws connections between Milton's use of ancient heritage and his poems' compositional structure, as well as its shaping influence on the major themes of Milton's works. Likewise, Shashkova's most elaborate chapter is devoted to the main functions of ancient imagery in *Paradise Lost* and which of Milton's ideas they are used to express in the epic. Shashkova concludes that Milton's use of ancient imagery reveals both traditional and innovative methods, with *Paradise Lost* epitomizing his most creative usage. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is a "large-scale metaphor that expresses one common idea: the struggle between the force of creation and the force of destruction in the world" (Shashkova 19).

Shashkova not only shares Samuel Johnson's idea about Milton's poetical freedom of choice in selecting and combining his literary sources from various historical

epochs, but she hopes to resurrect Johnson's 1781 universal approach to Milton, so lacking in current Milton studies in the West (6-7). Moreover, Shashkova criticizes recent Western scholarship on Milton, stating that it is inferior to its earlier counterpart because of its very narrow focus and often a mere "paraphrase of Milton's works or an analysis of famous literary studies at best" (8-9). The main shortcoming of the modern studies on Milton is the neglect of methodology and theory, understudied material, and severely subjective evaluations (Shashkova 9). As becomes clear from her introduction that includes a survey of relevant scholarship, among the Western studies on Milton that Shashkova finds most useful for her own research topic are G. C. Williamson (1905), E. M. Tillyard (1930), J. Bailey (1942), J. M. Webber (1979), J. G. Demaray (1980), and E. C. Brown (2001).

Deeply valuing a systematic approach to the analysis of literary works, Shashkova's methodology includes a comparative, typological, historic-literary, cultural-historical, and biographical analysis (18). Shashkova believes that considering Milton's works in the system of influences and interactions rather than in isolation will not only provide opportunities for their new readings, but will also reveal Milton's own approach to the solution of the literary critics' interpretative problems (16). Shashkova claims to have performed an unprecedentedly exhaustive, systematic analysis of ancient Greco-Roman imagery (epithets, metaphors, similes, borrowings, allusions, reminiscences) in Milton's early poetry and *Paradise Lost* (16). To illustrate her theory of the ancient Greco-Roman influence on Milton and their important evolving functions in his works, Shashkova selects for her analysis his "Elegy I" (1626), "To Shakespeare" (1630), "An

Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester" (1631), "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso" (1631-33?), *Comus* (1634), *Lycidas* (1638), and *Paradise Lost* (1667).

According to Shashkova, the Middle Ages only discovered ancient literature and tried to understand it from the strictly Christian position, then Renaissance worshipped and strived to resurrect it, whereas seventeenth century, while still admiring it, finally began to rethink ancient heritage and endow it with new meaning, often combining it with biblical ideas (4-5). John Milton's fate reflects "all of the catastrophes and hopes of the seventeenth century" (Shashkova 5), and thus he seems ideal for representing his contemporaries and the degree of ancient influence on their works. Moreover, for Shashkova, Milton is "one of the most vivid representatives of world literature" (16), and as such, his experience illuminates the influence of the ancient literature on the world literature at large.

Since ancient heritage plays a significant role in England's seventeenth-century literature, Shashkova first examines the use of ancient imagery in the works of Milton's contemporaries in order to establish the traditional pattern of such usage, and only then determines the degree of Milton's adherence to it in his early poetry, as well as carefully evaluates his idiosyncratic departures from it in his mature works. Shashkova's Chapter 1 determines that Milton's contemporaries strive to reject narrow interpretations of the ancient myths, preferring to use different, sometimes even opposite shades of meaning for the same ancient images, in order to express the themes of love and poetry or the author's political and religious views (172). Some of the seventeen-century poets even take literary risks by engaging in personal mythmaking, often changing ancient mythological plots for the goals of their own works and making ancient gods act in the

ways not typical for their original temperament (Shashkova 172). Shashkova concludes that Milton's use of ancient imagery has a systematic nature and is not coincidental (179). In fact, in Milton's works, ancient imagery serves various functions: it plays a significant role in the poems' compositional structure, reveals their important themes and ideas, demonstrates the evolution of characters' temperaments, and expresses Milton's own position towards the described events (Shashkova 19).

According to Shashkova, there are certain ancient images that appear in most of Milton's works, and their respective meanings are at first openly given by Milton in his early poetry, but then become veiled and more complex (180). In this evolution, Milton moves away from his single interpretation of ancient images in his early works to a more nuanced interpretation that focuses on their other, more obscure meanings in the ancient mythology in his mature works (Shashkova 180). While Milton's early poems do not yet show his full originality in using ancient imagery, they clearly demonstrate his advanced level of education and his literary taste (Shashkova 174). However, even his early poetry betrays Milton's careful selection of ancient images and their particular combination, such as their comparison or juxtaposition and their chosen order (Shashkova 174). Such usage of ancient imagery creates a subplot that reinforces the main plot by developing its ideas: the sequential appearance of Hymen (wedding), Lucina (childbirth), and Atropos (death) in "An Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester" can serve as an example of Milton's early craftsmanship (Shashkova 51).

In his early poetry, as Shashkova's Chapter 2 explains, Milton already uses ancient imagery for characterization by surrounding each of his protagonists with a selection of ancient images that are either similar or opposite in nature (51). For

example, both Pelops and Adonis are used by Milton to characterize the beauty of the young women in the “Elegy I” to Charles Diodati (Shashkova 55), whereas in *Comus*, Milton juxtaposes Diana and Cupid, Daphne and Phoebus (Shashkova 82). Also, Milton does not usually attach a fixed meaning to one ancient image—the same image can have a different, even opposite interpretation by Milton from one work to another (e.g. Saturn in “Il Penseroso” vs. in *Comus*), and especially when the poet engages in personal mythmaking (e.g. Comus as the son of Dionysus and Circe; Melancholy as the daughter of Saturn and Vesta in “Il Penseroso”) (Shashkova 176). Milton does not seem to differentiate between the Greek and Roman mythological systems (e.g. he uses Zeus and Jupiter interchangeably), only caring about their original semantic burden and about their potential for a new meaning (Shashkova 49). Throughout his works, Milton often compares his lyrical hero with great ancient poets, such as Homer, Virgil, and Ovid, in order to indicate the ideal of creative art, to develop the theme of the poet and poetry, and to introduce autobiographical themes—the most persistent trait of Milton’s usage of ancient imagery (Shashkova 52-53).

Shashkova’s Chapter 3 argues that in *Paradise Lost*, as in Milton’s mature work, the influence of ancient imagery finds its most expression, by creating not only vivid characterizations for its protagonists, but also shaping the structure of the epic and expressing Milton’s world outlook. The characterizations of the poem’s protagonists are two-fold, consisting of the external, physical descriptions and, more importantly, the internal, spiritual evaluation (Shashkova 179). Amazingly, both characterizations are achieved with Milton’s economical use of the same allusion to an ancient image that carries more than one meaning, which demonstrates Milton’s reliance on the reader’s

active engagement with the poem (Shashkova 180). The external characterization is often underlined by the context, surrounding events, and characters' own words, while the internal characterization is much deeper and more complex, being connected with the original semantic meaning of these characters and Milton's own attitude towards them (Shashkova 180). For example, Eve's beauty and grace are expressed through her comparison with Artemis, Aphrodite, Pomona, Ceres, and other ancient goddesses, whereas Adam's manliness and simultaneous softness are portrayed by Milton's allusion to the myth of love between Jupiter and Juno and by his comparison with Zephyrus (Shashkova 179). Similarly, Satan's grandiose terribleness is depicted by his likeness to Titans, Briareus, Typhon, and Python, while God the Father's large-scale strength and omnipotence are illustrated by Milton's allusions to the myths about Zeus and Jupiter (Shashkova 179). However, the internal characterization is also performed through Milton's use of ancient imagery: behind the description of Eve's physical beauty, Milton also provides hints about her inevitable Fall and his sadness about it, by comparing her to Narcissus, Pandora, and Circe (Shashkova 180). Likewise, behind the scenes celebrating Satan's bravery, self-sacrifice, and strength, Milton's allusions to the myths about Mars and to Homer's descriptions of Agamemnon reveal the true essence of Satan as a traitor (Shashkova 180).

According to Shashkova's memorable claim, while one can, perhaps more easily, obtain Milton's views from reading his prose works, *Paradise Lost* is Milton's only work that fully reveals his personal approach to and a nuanced assessment of the most important problems in the world (180-81). Hence, Milton's *Paradise Lost* can be considered a unique concentration of Milton's worldview, which cannot be fully revealed

without dissecting the significant role of the ancient heritage in the epic (Shashkova 181). For example, Milton's philosophical concept of the individual and his solution to the theological problem of free will are expressed through the characters of Adam and Eve, as Milton not only affirms their free will, but even their right to make a mistake (Shashkova 181). Although Milton is loyal to the biblical text in underlining the inevitability of the Fall with plentiful ancient imagery, he denies the power of the ancient concept of fate to rule humanity: having been faced with a difficult decision, Adam makes a *conscious* choice to fall (Shashkova 181). In contrast, the fallen angels' desire to connect the defeat of their rebellion with the power of the ancient fate only shows their weakness (Shashkova 181).

For Milton, the problem of the power of human Reason is tightly connected with the problem of free will: the Reason of a free human being is practically limitless, but it is immediately constrained if one gives in to lowly passions (Shashkova 181-82). This classicist conflict of Reason and passions is illustrated well on the example of Satan and especially Eve, when each of her steps towards the Fall is accompanied by new and more threatening ancient comparisons that indicate the overpowering of the passions in her soul: first with Pandora and Circe, then with Pomona (running from Vertumnus) and Ceres (before Jupiter fell in love with her), and finally with Eurynome (Shashkova 182). Milton insists that human beings can fight with their passions only by relying on divine assistance—without it, human beings are doomed to be ruled by their passions (Shashkova 182). If human beings credit God with the basis of human Reason, then their Reason is truly limitless, and by gradually self-improving, they can achieve a God-like state (Shashkova 182). Consequently, Milton's philosophical formula of true freedom in



*Paradise Lost* is: if serving God, one remains free, whereas given in to one's passions, one becomes their slave (Shashkova 182). This idea is illustrated by Milton with the gradual evolution of his protagonists from the state of innocence and closeness to God to the inevitable, but freely chosen Fall, and then finally to hope (Shashkova 182). This evolution is further underlined by Milton's numerous accompanying allusions to the ancient mythology throughout the poem (Shashkova 182).

According to Shashkova, *Paradise Lost* also sheds light on Milton's view of the Universe and Man's place in it. In Milton's Universe, there are two forces in constant interaction—the force of creation and the force of destruction—that are represented by God, Satan, and Chaos, and this struggle is the essence of the world and the basis of its structure (Shashkova 183). Milton's God is the creative force and brings freedom, while his Satan is the force of destruction with the propensity to enslave rather than harmonize (Shashkova 183). Milton's Chaos is neutral and also aharmonious, but is no more than a visual indicator of this struggle between God and Satan, since his presence in Milton's Universe either expands or shrinks, based on which of the two forces is winning at the moment (Shashkova 183). Like his Chaos, Milton's Satan is very complex and serves as a “large-scale allegory of the forces of destruction” (Shashkova 183). Because of Milton's political and religious views, Satan's image paradoxically combines two different meanings: an ancient warrior, who embodies the fight for freedom and reluctance to be subjected to power, and a traitor to God, the biblical Archenemy, who cannot claim puritanical Milton's sympathy (Shashkova 183-84). Milton's religious beliefs are reflected in the fact that Satan-warrior is freely compared to ancient gods, while God the Father and the Son are mostly spared such heathen comparisons (183-84).

Shashkova memorably argues that the practical absence of the ancient characteristics in Milton's God the Father in *Paradise Lost* allows us a better glimpse of Milton's personal attitude to God than even his tractate *On Christian Doctrine*, because the latter simply states his theological views, while the former actually reveals his faith (184).

The fourth and most recent post-Soviet dissertation on Milton is M. Iu. Sokolova's *The Idiosyncrasies of Space-Time Characteristics of John Milton's "Paradise Lost"* (2011). Directed by Professor Z. I. Kirnoze, Shashkova's dissertation was defended at the Nizhnii Novgorod State Linguistic University named after N. A. Dobroliubov, and consists of Introduction (pp. 3-24), two chapters, Conclusion (pp. 161-64), and Bibliography (pp. 165-75). Sokolova's bibliography contains over seventy English-language sources, some of which are electronic, especially her primary sources. It is notable that in new, post-Soviet Russia, Sokolova has current religious sources at her disposal as well, which she consults and cites in her dissertation. Chapter 1 of Sokolova's dissertation establishes the main problems of *Paradise Lost* and the image of Eden by using Milton's life as an approach to his epic and by viewing his political tractates and his translation of Psalms as the path to Eden of *Paradise Lost* (pp. 25-88). In addition, Chapter 1 considers the place of Milton's epic poem in the English literature of 1660-70s and its features of the Baroque and Classicism. Sokolova's Chapter 2 makes a case for the peculiarities of time and space in *Paradise Lost* as the synthesis of the ancient and the Christian heritage and for the pastoral in Milton's epic as the special chronotope (pp. 89-160).

Sokolova values a biographical method, firmly believing in the importance of Milton's biography for the understanding of his art (161). As "a direct participator in the

events of the English Revolution,” Milton considered the historical events of his time as “the facts of his personal biography,” and thus one cannot underestimate the influence of the biographical factors on the “formation of the creative features of Milton’s works,” which are the products of Milton’s biographical comprehension of the historical experience (Sokolova 23). According to Sokolova, Milton has remained “a deeply religious man” from his early years to the end of his life (161), and his works reflect his constant search for “the general harmony for Man both on the level of the state structure and on the level of private life” (23). In his quest for the best form to express his creative design, Milton chooses the genre of the epic to embody “the tragic idea about the impossibility of harmony and reasonable order of being” (Sokolova 23).

Sokolova’s methodology is biographical and comparative-historical; she also uses a systematic approach and the method of close reading. Sokolova adopts a “systematic-synergetic” approach to the study of literature advocated by her research advisor Z. I. Kirnoze in her 2011 co-authored textbook with V. G. Zinchenko and V. G. Zusman. Using this approach, Sokolova concludes that the peculiarities of space-time characteristics of the poem *Paradise Lost* should be viewed as a system of the whole and its parts: Milton’s oeuvre as a whole represents a system with his *Paradise Lost* as its center (22).

The focus of Sokolova’s dissertation is “the characteristics of time and space of Eden as the problem of Milton’s synthesis of the ancient and the Christian heritage in his poem *Paradise Lost* in general and in the interpretation of the idyllic in particular” (21). As she herself puts it, Sokolova’s dissertation “combines the study of the literary problems (the poetics of the poem *Paradise Lost*), of the religious questions (Milton’s

Protestant Christian concept), and of the linguistics (analysis of the poetic translation)” (21). In his 2006 edition of Milton’s works, A. N. Gorbunov remarks about “the peculiar tension in Milton’s conscience between the two poles—antiquity and Christianity”—and their unification in Milton’s works (582). Sokolova uses Gorbunov’s idea about this tension between the Christian, biblical aspect of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and its ancient imagery as the point-of-departure for her own dissertational research about the space-time parameters of the epic poem (Sokolova 18).

Sokolova argues that in *Paradise Lost*, “time and space are the necessary tools that allow Milton to elaborate the biblical plot into the form of epic narration” (20). In Milton’s epic, “the spatial limits of the universe are blurred, and the system of creation, the plot, and all of the poem’s characters (except for Adam and Eve) exist outside of time” (Sokolova 162). Also, in *Paradise Lost*, “the place of action is the human soul, where there is an eternal struggle between the forces of Good and Evil, Sin and Virtue, light and darkness, and day and night” (Sokolova 162). Since “the events of the epic—the fight between Good and Evil, Sin and Virtue—take place in human souls,” they happen “eternally and everywhere, outside of time and outside of space” (Sokolova 20). The garden of Paradise is the only place where the space and time become “humanized” and therefore “understood by and meaningful for the protagonists” (Sokolova 20).

Sokolova considers the pastoral in *Paradise Lost* as the unique synthesis of “the ancient” and “the Christian,” as well as the special chronotope of “time-space” (18). In her definition of the pastoral as the chronotope, Sokolova relies on M. M. Bakhtin’s theory about the categories of “time” and “space” in literature, articulated in *The Epic and the Novel*, especially his concept of the “chronotope” as the “genre-determining

category” of poetics (Sokolova 19-20). Applying Bakhtin’s classification of chronotopes, Sokolova defines the pastoral chronotope or the chronotope of the garden of Paradise as the “idyllic chronotope” in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (Sokolova 20). However, if in Bakhtin’s theory, “time” appears to have the leading role in the chronotope “time-space,” in Sokolova’s analysis of *Paradise Lost*, Milton’s “space” plays the leading, “sense-making role” in the epic (Sokolova 20).

Sokolova traces the evolution of the image of Nature in Milton’s poetics, by examining his *Paradise Lost*, early lyrics, translation of psalms, and political tractates (20). Sokolova concludes that Nature is “a popular literary theme” in Milton’s early poems, then it becomes the expression of “the general harmony and the unity of the Creator with his creatures” in Milton’s tractates and translation of psalms, and finally, in his poem *Paradise Lost*, Nature represents “a special chronotope uniting the ancient and the Christian traditions” (20-21). For Milton, Nature is “the result of God’s presence,” “a God-ordained order that can be juxtaposed to the Chaos” (Sokolova 23). In *Paradise Lost*, “Nature, created from the Word, retains its verbal character throughout the poem” (Sokolova 163). Although Nature “cannot communicate with God directly,” it is “the mediator between God and Man, the Creator’s Word, addressed to His creatures, and the instrument for knowing God’s laws” (Sokolova 163).

The Introduction of Sokolova’s dissertation offers a brief survey of the publication history of Milton’s works and their reception in England, especially of his *Paradise Lost* from its first edition to the present day. Sokolova mostly surveys Milton’s major English biographers, as well as a handful of Russian authors, translators, and critics, who studied and commented on Milton’s life and works.

In tracing the formation of Milton's image of Eden in his political pamphlets, Sokolova's Chapter 1 quotes mostly from *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649) and some from *A Treatise of Civil Power* (1659), *Areopagitica* (1644), *Of Education* (1643), and *Of Reformation* (1641). Sokolova determines that one of the main ideas in Milton's political tractates is the "quest for harmony in human life" (161). Towards the end of his life, in *Paradise Lost*, Milton once again returns to his notion of Nature as the proof of God's presence and to "his idea about the accustomization to Nature as the understanding of the Creator's design" (Sokolova 56). The garden of Paradise becomes the place of action, while the Fall and Man's removal outside its boundaries become the central event (Sokolova 56). According to Sokolova, "The pure, sheltered world of Nature can be compared with the inner world of a human being" (56). Milton writes in his tractates that "the development of the inner world" is important to "the development of the personal religious feeling" (Sokolova 56). Here Sokolova recognizes the same "paradise within" that the image of the garden of Paradise embodies in *Paradise Lost* and "the regaining of which is announced at the end of the poem" (56).

In Chapter 1, Sokolova also closely analyzes Milton's Psalm 114 titled "A Paraphrase on Psalm CXIV" (1624), comparing Milton's poetic paraphrasing with the biblical original and showing Milton's craftsmanship in the process. Sokolova recalls that Milton worked on paraphrasing Psalms throughout his life, starting in 1624 when as a student he translated 2 Psalms (114 and 136), then during his active political life and service for Oliver Cromwell when he paraphrased 10 Psalms (80-89), and finally after he became completely blind, Milton translated 8 more Psalms (1-8). The Psalms paraphrased by Milton in the period of 1641-1660 have two main themes: "the people's

address to God expressing their grief and request for justice” and the people’s “hymn of joy in worshipping God” (Sokolova 66). In the idyll of *Paradise Lost*, the theme of joy in worshipping the Creator is central, which allows Milton to revisit the texts of Psalms—Adam and Eve praise God with their prayer, whose “text” is Milton’s paraphrase of Psalm 148 (Sokolova 66).

Sokolova concludes her Chapter 1 with the discussion of the features of the Baroque and Classicism in *Paradise Lost*. As she puts it, Milton enriched the epic canon with the Baroque elements by “turning the horizontal epic space into cosmos, having connected the Christian vertical of the universe with the newest discoveries in astronomy, and by fitting the biblical history from Satan’s Fall to the Flood into the frames of the epic narration” (Sokolova 87). The Baroque’s tendency to unite “religion and scientific knowledge, faith and rational comprehension of the world had a great meaning for Milton who strove to find a divine source of every fact” (Sokolova 86). In the Baroque architecture, the effect of infinity was very important and it was “achieved by the arches, balconies, and the distortion of the wall surface” (Sokolova 87). According to Sokolova, in *Paradise Lost*, the infinity is “the space around the Earth, which is located at the center of the ‘Ladder’ of the world creation that leads infinitely up and down” (87). Moreover, “The architecture of the poem’s space can be imagined in the shape of the cross with two equal poles, Heaven and Hell, as the vertical line, and Chaos as the horizontal line crossing it about the middle point” (Sokolova 87-88). Also, “Between Heaven and Hell, there is a concentric sphere surrounded by water” (Sokolova 88). However, Chaos is not part of the Baroque architecture since it cannot be shaped into any form (Sokolova 88).

Since Milton's *Paradise Lost* is an epic poem with a biblical plot, the synthesis of the ancient and the Christian elements results in the special type of the epic. As Sokolova puts it, "Due to the introduction of the Christian element into the epic poem, *Paradise Lost* obtains a universal coverage and a universal meaning that are more wide-scaled than those of the pagan world," which creates "a tension between the ancient heritage and Milton's Christian world outlook, a balance between the old and the new," where the author "simultaneously addresses the 'past' and influences the 'future'" (88).

In Chapter 2, Sokolova figures out "the semantics of time" in *Paradise Lost*: "The reader together with Adam and Eve undergoes the central event—the Fall of Man as the event of the 'present,' and the time of narration has two vectors, directed towards the 'past' and the 'future' that are revealed during the conversations with the other characters" (89). In *Paradise Lost*, the invocation of the Muse typical in ancient literature is at first complicated with "Heav'nly Muse" and is then "transformed into the invocation of the Holy Spirit" (Sokolova 89). Milton emphasizes that his epic is inspired "by the same Holy Spirit that dictated Genesis to the prophet Moses" (Sokolova 90). Sokolova believes that "By placing himself in the same row with the Old Testament's prophets, Milton creates the illusion that he does not simply relate, but 'predicts' the events of his poem" (90). Sokolova argues that "Milton's desire to compose an epic poem that would embody the Christian history of humanity and sound like a 'prophecy' resulted in the peculiar union of the space-time characteristics" (94). At the beginning of the poem, the author "predicts" what his epic will be about, and then in Heaven, God the Father "foresees the appearance of Satan and his victory over Man, Man's punishment and Christ's Man-saving sacrifice" (Sokolova 94). In Hell and then in Eden, Satan



“foresees and predicts Man’s imminent Fall,” and after the Fall, God the Father predicts the future of humanity until the Flood that appears to Adam in a vision (Sokolova 94). In other words, the “future events are ‘predicted’ not only by the poem’s characters that are at different levels of world creation, but also by the poem’s author who is ‘outside’ of his work and ‘sees’ the cosmic system of the Universe and knows how the events of his narration begin and end” (Sokolova 94-95). This way, the “‘predictions’ of all of the poem’s characters are included in the ‘prediction’ of the epic author about his poem’s events” (Sokolova 95).

Milton uses the same principle in creating the “semantics of space” in *Paradise Lost*: by the “inclusion of the three-level system of world creation in the cosmic system of rotating bodies that are ‘seen’ by the author as if from the outside” (Sokolova 95). This way, “‘the ancient’ not only once again crosses ‘the Christian,’ but also includes the contemporary notions about the structure of cosmos” (Sokolova 95). It is quite “paradoxical” that despite his seemingly comprehensive description of the Universe, Milton “does not ‘provide’ a concrete scheme of world creation”—he “does not follow a particular model, but instead tries to reflect all of the known notions about cosmos” (Sokolova 102). In Book 8 of *Paradise Lost*, in his conversation with Adam about stars and planets, Archangel Raphael “mixes the ideas of Ptolemy and Copernicus” (Sokolova 102-03). Raphael explains to Adam that some knowledge should not be sought, as if implying that “science about cosmos also belongs to the forbidden fruit” (Sokolova 103). Raphael’s advice underlines “the human incapability to think outside of the pastoral chronotope’s boundaries” and “the limited nature of human knowledge” (Sokolova 132).

Sokolova insists that although many Miltonists agree that the pastoral in *Paradise Lost* “is not merely an interpolated? element, but has a central place and specific features,” there is still “no determinative answer about the place and role of the pastoral in Milton’s epic narration” (115). Sokolova argues that in *Paradise Lost*, “the pastoral chronotope is the only space approachable by human understanding,” and that the limits of the pastoral chronotope circumscribe “the capabilities of human Reason to comprehend the structure and history of the creation of the world” (20). Although the pastoral is the genre of the ancient literature, in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, it points to the Christian heritage as well (Sokolova 163). Similarly, “the ‘garden’ is the topos of the pastoral and idyllic texts,” but in Milton’s poem, it acquires a new meaning (Sokolova 163). According to Sokolova, “The ‘pastoral idyll’—Man’s harmony with Nature and with God—ends with the Fall of Man, but the functions of the ‘Christian’ pastoral go much further” (163). Also, “the garden of Paradise, ‘Eden,’ disappears after the Fall, and one can return there only having obtained a [Christian] ‘paradise within’” (Sokolova 163). In the garden of Paradise, Adam and Eve praise God with their morning and evening prayers, familiar in “the life of the typical Christian community” (Sokolova 163). For the “text” of Adam and Eve’s prayers Milton uses the biblical Psalms, but “he paraphrases them in such a way that Adam and Eve’s prayer becomes his own poetic interpretation of the liturgical texts” (Sokolova 163).

The space-time characteristics also “determine the system of the characters in the poem”: in *Paradise Lost*, “there are only two characters that are creatures of the material world—human beings Adam and Eve” (Sokolova 23). According to Sokolova, “Adam and Eve are the inhabitants of the pastoral chronotope—the oasis of ideal Nature that is

isolated from the outside world. In the entire cosmos of *Paradise Lost*, this isolated-from-the-Chaos world is the only world that is comprehensible to human Reason” (23-24). In addition, “The garden of Paradise has an outside boundary that Satan must overcome”—a surrounding wall, which “resembles monastic gardens protected from the outside sinful world” (Sokolova 132). Sokolova notes that “In Milton’s poem, the description of Eden reflects the tendencies of the contemporary philosophical concepts expressed in the art of gardening and park creation” (24). Also, “in literature, the image of the garden has ancient and Christian roots, which permitted the synthesis of the ‘ancient’ and of the ‘Christian’ in the image of Eden in *Paradise Lost*” (Sokolova 24).

The specific characteristics of Milton’s pastoral chronotope are the dream and the tradition of singing Psalms. The pastoral imagery starts penetrating the liturgical texts with the emergence of the biblical Psalms, where the most frequent pastoral images include “pure springs,” “mountains,” “forests,” “wolf,” “sheep,” “lamb,” “pastures,” and “garden” (Sokolova 123). A special feature of the pastoral chronotope in *Paradise Lost* is “Milton’s use of the paraphrased Psalms for the text of Adam and Eve’s prayer” (Sokolova 24). Here Milton once again “connects the ancient and the Christian traditions,” by using ancient imagery even “in the Christian call to praise God” (Sokolova 24). Although Adam and Eve’s prayer “retains the heroic meter,” its “syntactically parallel structures approximate the sound of the ‘prayer’ as if it were read during the liturgical service in the Church” (Sokolova 24).

According to Sokolova, “‘dream’ is the main characteristic” of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (24). Sokolova recalls that in literature, the use of dreams and dreaming originates in antiquity, and “dreams or revelations have a great meaning in the Christian tradition”

(24). Moreover, “In *Paradise Lost*, a dream not only blurs the boundary between light and darkness, [...], but also unites the ancient and the Christian beginnings” (Sokolova 24). As Sokolova puts it, “God, Satan, archangels, angels, allegorical figures of Sin and Death are simultaneously part of the ‘reality’ and of the ‘dream’ zones. They also connect the biblical imagery with the historical reality of the English Revolution. The real and the surreal exist in the poem almost equally” (162-63). Milton’s use of dreams and visions in *Paradise Lost* are characteristic of his original style, because in the Bible, there is no Eve’s dream before the Fall, no Adam’s visions of the future, or the description of Adam and Eve’s state of pseudo-insight right after the Fall. In contrast, “‘dream’ accompanies all of the key moments of [Milton’s] plot: Satan awakens his oblivious legions; as a toad, Satan reaches sleeping Eve at night; Eve has a disturbing dream; Adam is put to sleep during the creation of Eve; having tasted the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve undergo an “‘illusionary” state of pseudo-insight; Adam has a vision of the future, while Eve is put to sleep (Sokolova 146).

Although the description of Eden in Book 4 of *Paradise Lost* is the most detailed representation of the pastoral world, there are many other descriptions of Nature throughout the epic. Already in Books 1 and 2, the world of Nature as the symbol of harmony and order is juxtaposed to Chaos (Sokolova 133). In Book 4, Satan is “stunned by the view of the garden of Paradise” and is moved to remorse by “the beauty of Nature and the pastoral harmony” (Sokolova 133). Book 7 narrates about the creation of the world by God’s Word within 6 days, and on the seventh day, there is music, which is “characteristic of the pastoral world” (Sokolova 134).

As a result of Milton's "deeply innovative" combination of the ancient and Christian traditions, the image of Eden is "presented as an idyll, where space and time correspond to the idyllic chronotope" (Sokolova 162). According to Sokolova, "The garden of Eden is the sphere of the isolated pastoral world" (162). Moreover, "Milton's Eden is located at the center of creation between Heaven and Hell, whereas the Earth, that contains the garden of Paradise, is part of the system of rotating cosmic bodies" (Sokolova 162). As even its title already indicates, Milton's *Paradise Lost* is "Eden-centric," since "the garden of Paradise is the central place of action" and the Fall of Man and the consequent loss of Paradise are the epic's "central event" (Sokolova 102).

To her credit, Sokolova takes advantage of the 2008 biography of John Milton co-authored by Gordon Campbell and Thomas Corns and titled *John Milton: Life, Work and Thoughts* (Oxford), as well as current electronic sources on the internet, such as John Rogers' free lectures on Milton from his Open Course at Yale ("Milton with Professor John Rogers" at <http://oyc.yale.edu/english/milton/>) and Professor Thomas Luxon's "Milton Reading Room" at Dartmouth College ([http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading\\_room/contents/index.shtml](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/contents/index.shtml)). Most of Milton's prose works (especially in Latin) have not been translated into Russian and are not readily available to the Russian scholars in the original in hard copy, and therefore their English translations on the internet are often the only recourse.

Sokolova refreshingly admits that doing serious research on Milton in the English archives is a must but is realistically out of reach for the Russian scholars, and thus Russian graduate students' dissertations usually have to rely on and repeat the well-known biographical facts about Milton uncovered by the English Miltonists (6). Among

the Western Miltonists, Sokolova finds most useful and relevant to her own research the works by J. Addison, S. Johnson, D. Masson, T. B. Macaulay, G. Campbell, R. Daniells, M. Roston, R. M. Frye, R. D. Emma, and A. D. Ferry. Sokolova helpfully uses original English names for Miltonists in addition to transliterating them into Russian letters, which reduces some of the common confusion in bibliographic references, since some of the Russian scholars' names can sound foreign and be mistaken for English names merely transliterated into Russian.

Unfortunately, despite its many merits, Sokolova's dissertation has some factual inaccuracies. For example, N. A. Kholodkovskii (1858-1921) was not the first Russian biographer of Milton (Sokolova 8), since his 1911 translation of *Paradise Lost* with the prefatory biographical piece on Milton has been preceded by similar, but earlier and more extensive efforts of A. Shul'govskaia (1878; 1895—2<sup>nd</sup> edition), Evgenii A. Solov'ev (1894), and Ivan Ivanov (1896), not to mention shorter essays on Milton with a biographical focus by Professor V. Kamburov (1905), Maksim M. Kovalevskii (1909), and K. Tiander (1909). With the exception of E. A. Solov'ev, none of these Russian biographers and critics of Milton are even mentioned in Sokolova's bibliography, which is rather surprising considering her biographical emphasis. Likewise, after mentioning N. A. Kholodkovskii's 1911 translation of *Paradise Lost* in St. Petersburg, Sokolova jumps straight to the 1999 edition of Milton's works (Sokolova 11), as if 88 years went by without the 1976 publication of the most famous and numerous Soviet edition of Milton's poetry in the translation by A. A. Shteinberg and Iu. A. Korneev in 303,000 copies. Although, in her footnote #4, Sokolova does acknowledge that the 1999 edition contains

the 1976 translation (Sokolova 11), she does not cite the original Soviet edition and does not make clear that the 1999 edition is a mere post-Soviet reprint of the Soviet edition.

To this day, there is no comprehensive compilation of all the Russian translations and editions of Milton's works either in Russian or in English, which leads to the scholarly confusion and resulting inaccuracies. Valentin Boss has attempted to make a table of the pre-Soviet translations and editions of Milton's works in his book's Appendix, but it seems quite incomplete and appears in a rather confusing format with some missing names of the translators or editors next to the publication dates.

In 2008, Vladislav N. Zabaluev composed his dissertation titled *The English Masque of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: From Ph. Sidney to J. Milton* and directed by famous Miltonist, Professor A. N. Gorbunov at Moscow State University. Chapter 3 of Zabaluev's dissertation, titled "The Masque of the Epoch of the First Stuarts—James I and Charles I," has a section that discusses John Milton's two masques *Arcades* and *Comus* (pages 196-229). The bibliography of Zabaluev's dissertation lists 278 sources, 197 of which are in English, with 16 specifically on John Milton (##263-278). In his Introduction, Zabaluev laments the pitiful, unstudied status of the masque genre as a whole in the Soviet and Russian literary criticism. In fact, Milton's *Comus* is the only masque of the Elizabethan and Jacobean period that is popular with the Russian critics, mostly due to its author's name (Zabaluev 3). Zabaluev concedes that in the beginning, such neglect of the masque genre was true in the West as well, but then its status with the literary critics had much improved with the works by S. Orgel in 1960s-70s and by Martin Butler from 1989 and on (Zabaluev 8-9). However, even in the West, Milton's *Comus* has often been studied outside of its historical context and connections

with other texts or inaccurately considered the genre representative of all masques (Zabaluev 5). Also, according to Zabaluev, most Western scholars who study *Comus* examine its philosophical and moral problems rather than its genre features (5). Zabaluev uses John Carey's 1997 edition of Milton's shorter poems for his textual analysis of *Arcades* and *Comus*.

Zabaluev's dissertation aims to show the masque genre as "the forum that discussed the main problems of the seventeenth-century England" (10). Zabaluev discovers that the history of the masque is tightly connected with the history of England: it emerges during Elizabeth I's reign, reaches its "golden" peak with James I, and slowly fades during Charles I's rule (195-96). According to Zabaluev, John Milton's *Comus* ended the genre of the masque and the entire period of English history, from Elizabeth I to Charles I (11). In fact, Thomas Carew's *Coelum Britannicum* (1634) was "the last page of the history of the [masque] genre," while Milton's *Comus* "became its epilogue" (Zabaluev 196). Zabaluev recalls that unlike the traditional masques that were performed at the royal court, Milton's masques *Arcades* and *Comus* were staged at the aristocratic families (9). Zabaluev argues that Milton attempts to use the genre of the masque for the propaganda of his ideas (206). Milton's decision to remain an anonymous author of *Comus* "may indicate his uncertainty about the reception of his masque that challenges contemporary values" (Zabaluev 201).

Zabaluev believes that *Arcades* "initiates Milton's criticism of the courtly aesthetics and politics," by elevating the Countess above the Queen Henrietta Maria and the "pastoral values" of her Court (198-99). As he puts it, "By making the seventy-three year old Countess the only center of the performance, Milton challenges the Neo-Platonic



idea that outward beauty is the reflection of the inner virtue” (Zabaluev 198). Moreover, “The Countess replaces the King and the Queen embodying royal and even divine features” (Zabaluev 198). Like later in *Comus*, Milton “juxtaposes pagan and Christian notions of rural life” in *Arcades*, by providing a true and a false image of a shepherd for political and religious reasons (Zabaluev 199). Unlike the pagan shepherds, the Genius of the Wood “not only heals fallen Nature but even tries to reconcile pagan gods to Christianity” (Zabaluev 199).

According to Zabaluev, Puritans discovered anew the “theatricality of Evil,” and Milton echoes this notion in both his *Comus* and *Paradise Lost* (18). In fact, Milton’s *Comus* is built on the juxtaposition of the prohibited music (*musica prohibita*) and the sacred music (*musica sacra*) (Zabaluev 18). In addition, in the characters of *Comus* and *Lady*, Milton juxtaposes two extreme positions—pagan humanism and Christianity (Zabaluev 205). Zabaluev insists that *Comus* is “a masque of a new type,” where the poet acts as a teacher educating a wealthy family and his numerous readers about virtue (202). As he puts it, “Milton shows what good moral education the young Egertons have received, believing that the moral health of the nation depends on the formation of such young aristocrats” (Zabaluev 202). Milton does not approve of the principles advocated by the Caroline masques and restores the fallen Man’s perspective, usually omitted from them (Zabaluev 202). For Zabaluev, “Milton’s masque investigates the nature of temptation and the problem of deceit and illusion in the fallen world, where people’s physical appearance does not reflect their inner essence, and finally, the fact that Evil is not so easily defeated as it was presented in the traditional masques” (202).

Zabaluev believes that in *Comus*, Milton is Ben Jonson's follower because poetry is its main essence, while non-literary elements are reduced to a minimum (206). By striving to fill the old form with the new content, Milton breaks with the masque tradition in many ways: he does away with the idealization of the royal court and with the conventions of the pastoral genre (Zabaluev 206). Zabaluev agrees with T.S. Eliot's assessment that Milton's *Comus* is "the death of the masque," because Milton destroys the genre by making it the mouthpiece of his ideas with even bigger honesty than Jonson (206). If Jonson leaves the choice to his spectators and readers by addressing his criticism "only to those who can hear it," Milton's criticism "is addressed to all, and it is so honest that it becomes impossible to imagine that anyone would take *Comus*'s side after reading the masque," since Good and Evil are "stunningly concrete in their imagery" (Zabaluev 206).

For Zabaluev, *Comus* "is not a true artist," and he deceives himself while trying to deceive the Lady (206). *Comus* cannot fully understand why the Lady rejects him, because this is the first time that he is faced with such a sincere resistance (Zabaluev 206). Zabaluev memorably argues that the Lady herself also "tries to seduce *Comus* in order to return him to the true path," so *Comus* is actually "a masque about the unsuccessful redemption" (206). The Lady could have redeemed *Comus* if she had not been burdened by the original sin: in order to be able "to return *Comus* to God, the Lady must become him, but it is impossible" (Zabaluev 206). Although Good and Evil "cannot be apart from each other, their synthesis is also impossible," which is "the meaning of Milton's 'tragic dialectic'" (Zabaluev 206). Milton juxtaposes the right and the wrong conduct, by portraying *Comus* "not as a universal enemy, but as a 'fallen angel,' the

tempter of the middle hand”—“human beings should behave like the Lady, and not like Comus” (Zabaluev 206).

According to Zabaluev, Milton’s reformation of the masque genre in *Arcades* and particularly in *Comus* is so obvious since a traditional Caroline masque was typically lavish and did not comment on the social problems or criticized Charles I’s absolutist rule, but instead created the cult of Platonic love embodied by the royal marriage of Charles I and Henrietta Maria and “mystified and mythologized power” (196). The “form, theme, and ethics” of Milton’s *Comus* “embody Puritan religious and political values”—Milton does not use “expensive and exquisite [staging] machinery” typical of the Caroline masques (Zabaluev 226). The main protagonists—the Lady and her two brothers—“are not the allegorical figures,” and the virtues of Faith, Love, and Chastity are not personified like they would be in a traditional masque, but instead “live in the Lady’s consciousness” (Zabaluev 226). Also, Milton’s characterization of Evil is presented from the perspective of Protestantism, *not* Platonism of the traditional Caroline masque, and “the ideal world” of *Comus* is the Ludlow’s Castle rather than the Royal Court (Zabaluev 226). Zabaluev points out that “At the end of the masque, Evil remains: it is just as dangerous to wander through the dark forest as before since Comus has not been completely defeated and he has not repented” (226). Moreover, the monarch is not a savior and does not embody the Good in *Comus*—that role is instead transferred to the nymph Sabrina, the river Severn’s deity (Zabaluev 226). The Lady cannot get out of Comus’s chair without supernatural intervention, because, despite of all of her virtue, she is still burdened by the original sin (Zabaluev 226).

Zabaluev concludes that Milton's *Arcades* and *Comus* "reject both the extremities of courtly aesthetics and of Puritanism" (197). Moreover, "Milton's goal was to inculcate Puritan values in noble families using the genre familiar to them" (Zabaluev 197). In Zabaluev's words: "Both masques concern the reforms of the courtly genres and the values associated with them. At the center of both works, there is a journey to a noble family and an emphasis on poetry, songs, and music as the means for healing a human being" (197).

There are also some more obscure recent Russian studies of John Milton's works that are "hidden" inside unpublished doctoral dissertations because they constitute only a chapter or a section of a larger research work and thus do not appear in its title, but only in the table of contents. For example, in 2001, Oleg Iu. Poliakov wrote his doctoral dissertation titled *Literary Criticism in England's Periodicals of the 1690s-1750s (The Evolution of Generic Concepts and the Transformation of the Method)* and directed by Professor V. A. Lukov at Moscow Pedagogical State University. In Chapter 1 of Poliakov's dissertation, titled "The Theory of Genres in the Literary Criticism of the Periodicals of the 1690s-1730s (The Formal-Mimetic Method)," there is a section titled "The Discussions of the Poetics of the Epic Poem in the Literary Journals (The Reception of John Milton's Works)" (pp. 103-35). Since Poliakov's dissertation concerns the Western reception of John Milton based on the literary criticism in the eighteenth-century England's periodicals, its detailed annotation here is not deemed necessary, as its topic is already very familiar to Western Miltonists, much in contrast to the Russian scholars, who are Poliakov's intended audience.

In 2002, at the History Department of Kazan' State University, Oleg V. Bodrov composed his dissertation titled *M. M. Kovalevskii—A Historian of the English Social and Political Thought of the New Time* and directed by the late Professor of History P. B. Umanskii. Bodrov's Chapter 2, titled "England's Political and Social Thought in the Epoch of Tudors and First Stuarts in Kovalevskii's works," has a section titled "The Socio-Political Views of the Republicans: John Milton and Algernon Sidney" (pp. 168-97), more than half of which is devoted to Kovalevskii's view of Milton based on his long article commemorating Milton's 300<sup>th</sup> birthday. However, since Bodrov's dissertation does not provide his own view of John Milton, but rather summarizes Kovalevskii's reception of the English poet, my detailed annotation of Kovalevskii's 1909 article is offered here instead, in my chapter titled "Pre-Soviet Criticism of John Milton (1745-1917)."

In 2003, directed by Professor G. N. Khrapovitskaia at Moscow Pedagogical State University, Ol'ga O. Shuvalova's dissertation *The Structure-Creating Role of Leitmotifs and Symbols in Charles Dickens's Novels* discusses the role of symbolism in the English literary tradition before Dickens in its first chapter titled "Charles Dickens's Symbolism in the Literary Context." Consequently, Chapter 1 of Shuvalova's dissertation on Charles Dickens has an unexpected section titled "Symbolism in Milton's Poem *Paradise Lost*" (pages 48-57).

Finally, in 2006, Iuliia A. Barashkovskaia wrote her dissertation titled *History and Fiction in the English Novel of the 1980s-1990s* and directed by Professor N. A. Solov'eva at Moscow State University. Chapter 3 of Barashkovskaia's dissertation titled "The Alternative History in Peter Ackroyd's Works (*Chatterton* and *Milton in America*)"

has a section titled “Principles of Creating Images of Puritans and Catholics in the Novel *Milton in America*” (pp. 132-60). Of course, Barashkovskaia’s dissertation is not directly on John Milton, but is rather on Ackroyd’s fictional portrayal of him in his novel; however, it is still a telling illustration of Russian interest in Milton and his reception in the West.

E. V. Pleshakova’s brief article on the transformation of the biblical image of Abaddon in the epics of Milton and Klopstock views the Bible as a priceless source of themes and images for literary works. Such biblical images then enter fictional texts that develop, rethink, and transform them in the process, often endowing them with new features and silencing their traditional ones (Pleshakova 120). When authors address the antinomy (binary?) of good and evil, they often resort to the biblical characters of God, angels, and Jesus Christ, on the one hand, and Satan and demons, on the other. It is notable that the theme of Heaven and Good usually has a clear division of its characters, such as angels, Messiah, and apostles, while the demonic theme is often introduced only collectively, even though the Bible already mentions more than one character of the Kingdom of Darkness (Pleshakova 120). Pleshakova draws our attention to an “unnoticeable, even somewhat modest character of the fallen angel Abaddon as he appears in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century literature” (120).

According to Pleshakova, the Hebrew word “abaddon” means “abyss,” “destruction.” In the Old Testament, “abaddon” is the *place* of death, ruin, and only in the Revelation of John, does “Abaddon” become an animate, personified character—an angel of the abyss, a leader of the destructive locusts that look like horses prepared for war in the Apocalypse (120). The modern Russian translation of the Bible mentions

Abaddon's name only 5 times; however, this has not always been the case (Pleshakova 120). Before the nineteenth century, the Russian translations of the Bible used for church service did not mention Abaddon at all: the abyss was called "paguba" ("ruin") and its image was personified (121). Likewise, many modern German and English editions of the Bible also do not mention Abaddon except for Apocalypse (121). In these editions, the word "Abaddon" is translated as "death," "the world of the dead," or "abyss" (Pleshakova 121). In the modern Russian translation of the Bible, there are 50 mentions of the word "bezдна" ("abyss") and over 400 mentions of the word "smert'" ("death"). Hence, one can conclude not only that the notion of "Abaddon" has 2 different meanings in the Bible, but that the usage of this word does not always coincide in various translations (Pleshakova 121).

Pleshakova is interested only in one, *personified* meaning of the word "Abaddon," which gave rise to an independent, though rare, character of world literature. Milton's "In all her gates Abaddon rues thy bold attempt" in Book 4 of *Paradise Regained* is Abaddon's only appearance in English literature since John Wycliffe's translation of the Bible, according to the Oxford Dictionary (Pleshakova 121). Although *Paradise Lost* never mentions Abaddon's name, whose image is inseparable from the demonic kingdom, the images of abyss, destruction, and death appear in rich detail and are at times even personified by Milton, as in Book 2, where the image of abyss, death is also two-fold like it is in the Bible (122). Pleshakova not only equates Milton's character Death, but also his mother Sin in *Paradise Lost* with Abaddon because both Milton's Sin and the biblical Abaddon in Revelation (9.1-11) share the role of the keeper of the key to Hell (122). However, Milton's suffering Abaddon in *Paradise Regained* differs both from the

biblical Abaddon and from his rebellious image of God's enemy in Satan and his crew in *Paradise Lost*.

Unlike Milton's *Paradise Lost* that is based on the Genesis story about the Fall of Man, Klopstock's *Messias* relies on the events of the New Testament. However, like in Milton, Klopstock's epic clearly juxtaposes Good and Evil, and his demonic kingdom is also represented not only by Satan, but also by Beelzebub, Andrameleh?, and Lucifer, and by many other independent demonic characters (Pleshakova 122). Unlike Milton's Abaddon who sometimes blends with the character of Satan, Klopstock's Abaddon is a "fully personified character, who is capable of tears and joy"—"a fallen angel, a seraph, Abdiel Abaddon" (Pleshakova 122). In fact, Klopstock's Abaddon can be considered one of the main protagonists in the epic since he makes his appearance eight times and his feelings are presented so fully by the author, who keeps offering him new opportunities to go back to Heaven through repentance: Abaddon searches for and finds Messiah in Gefsimaniia? and later sees Him on the Cross (122-23).

In her conclusion, Pleshakova summarizes the literary evolution of Satan's character: since the Middle Ages, the collective image of Satan has become an embodiment of evil, destruction, death, and God's enemy in European literature, as it assimilated many of the features of the rejected individual heathen deities (123). In the Bible, Satan is a fallen angel, who used to be one of the most wonderful angels, but who was rejected for his pride in imagining himself equal to God. In Protestant literature, beginning from the sixteenth century, there emerges an image of a fallen, suffering angel-demon as an answer to Catholic authors' question: "How could an Angel chose Evil?" (Pleshakova 123). Therefore, Pleshakova views Klopstock's characterization of



Abaddon in his epic as a new stage in this character's development, since the author chooses to provide an opportunity for the fallen, restless angel to repent and go back to his Creator (123).

Although T. V. Antonova, Professor of History at Moscow State Open Pedagogical University, teaches at the Department of Russian History, she is familiar enough with John Milton's *Areopagitica* to mention its influence on tsarist Russia's history with censorship already in her 1992 book on the struggle for the freedom of the press in Russia in the period of 1862-1882. Then, only four years later, Antonova devoted her 1996 article to the topic of Milton's spirit in Russia, which traces imperial Russia's use of censorship to suppress even the slightest unorthodox ideas of free press and thus mostly represents her earlier book's arguments in miniature, but expands the margins of the historical timeframe to the period of 1765-1907. Antonova's book focuses on progressive Russian thought expressed in democratic and liberal periodicals of 1862-1882, which coincides with the period of Alexander II's rule (1855-1881) that is characterized by several censorship reforms (e.g. 6 April 1865). Her article's historical surveys spans from Catherine II's 1765 decree to the 1907 full Russian translation and publication of Milton's *Areopagitica* with a preface by A. Rozhdestvenskii and commentary.

In her article "Milton's Spirit in Russia," Antonova summarizes Milton's three main arguments against censorship in his *Areopagitica*: first, since censorship is the child of the Inquisition, a policy that has been rejected by the European Reformation, its lifetime should have long expired. Secondly, censorship is doomed to be useless, because the word is stronger and its prohibition can only be temporary and conditional,

and thirdly, while not defeating Evil, censorship can nevertheless bring irreversible harm to science, Truth, and even to the government (Antonova 76). However, Antonova cautions that Milton's alternative is not lawlessness or the anarchy of the word, but a strict and reasonable law: the freedom of the press is still a hard responsibility, only not before the governmental or church censor, who can arbitrarily interpret the word like a dictator, but before the law and the Court (76). According to Antonova, "Milton became needed in Russia only over 200 years later, when its society, enlightened by the government, came into an inevitable conflict with censorship, and when the Russian writers could no longer follow A. S. Pushkin's conviction that 'What London needs is still too early for Moscow'" (76-77).

Under Alexander II, the journalists of different political orientation showed their solidarity in the fight for the freedom of the press by drafting a collective note to the government in 1861, which criticized censorship and emphasized the idea of the universal meaning of the press that would also benefit the government as much as literature (Antonova 78). This temporary solidarity of different journalistic "parties" also resulted in the popularization of England's experience and Milton's arguments in his *Areopagitica* by Russian presses in Moscow and St. Petersburg, in such periodicals as *Library for Reading* and *The Contemporary* (Antonova 78). For example, K. K. Arsen'ev, a professional lawyer and publicist, wrote an essay titled "The English Constitution in the period of 1760-1860" that was published in 4 issues of the Russian periodical *Otechestvennye Zapiski* in 1862. His last article on the subject covered the events of seventeenth-century England, emphasizing the abolishment of censorship in 1695 that allowed the freedom of the press to serve "as an intermediary between the

government and its people, as an oratory tribune for those who do not have a voice in parliament,” thus becoming “a necessary addition to the state’s structure” (261, quoted in Antonova 78). Likewise, N. G. Chernyshevskii fought for the freedom of the press from 1858-1861 and was consequently arrested as the editor of the Russian periodical *The Contemporary*, whose publication was suspended by the government for eight months in the summer of 1862 (Antonova *Bor’ba za svobodu* 23). After resuming the periodical’s publication, its editors still dared to feature controversial topics about censorship, such as M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin’s “obozrenie” in the first issue of 1863.

Antonova argues that “Milton’s words were extrapolated onto the Russian historical situation of the early 1860s in the hope of influencing both the public opinion and Alexander II’s government that was getting ready to reform censorship” (78). However, there was still a debate among the journalists about whether England’s experience could be directly transplanted onto Russia’s soil or if England’s free press was the fruit of its own soil, non-transferable to foreign lands (Antonova 78). Moreover, some journalists insisted on the direct correlation between the press and the political system, while others denied it, which also generated the chicken-and-egg question about whether the English Parliament became what it did due to the English press, or whether the English press reached its mighty status because of the English Parliament (Antonova 78).

Alexander II’s censorship reform was not following “Milton’s scenario”: believing that the press perverts its readers’ minds with the hate towards government and thus is the main source of societal discontent, the Russian tsar had no plans for abolishing censorship, but instead wanted to enforce it (Antonova 80). Although for the Minister of

the People's Enlightenment, the 19 February 1861 abolishment of serfdom promised to bring with it more freedom to the press as well, by replacing the existing pre-publication censorship and administrative persecution with after-the-fact legal sanctions by the Court, he found out soon enough that his tsar was not sharing his liberal view (Antonova 80). Thus, despite A. V. Golovnin's numerous liberal efforts at the censorship reform, Alexander II's 6 April 1865 law essentially upheld Nicholas I's 1828 order and gave the licensing power to the Minister of Internal Affairs to warn periodicals of their harmful influence twice before suspending their publication for six months until his further approval (Antonova 80-81). During his short-lived rule in 1880, Count M. T. Loris-Melikov attempted to liberate the press from the pre-publication censorship, but his efforts also ended in failure when his opponent K. P. Pobedonostsev came to power in 1881—his 27 August 1882 order restored Alexander II's 6 April 1865 law (Antonova 81). Thus, the repressed status of the Russian press remained until the 1905 Revolution that resulted in the 17 October 1905 manifesto, which finally granted the freedom to the Russian press among other civil liberties (Antonova 81). In the second year of the 1905 Revolution, the Russian intelligentsia recalled censorship by reprinting N. L. Tible's 1868 translation of Milton's *Areopagitica* in 3 different presses and cities: "Svetoch" in Petersburg, Gronkovskii's press in Kazan', and the firm "Posrednik" in Moscow (Antonova 81).

Zabaluev's 2005 English article titled "John Milton's Blindness as a Source of *Paradise Lost*" and prepared for the international conference at the University of Durham traces poetic evidence of Milton's auditory imagination and his artistic triumph in *Paradise Lost* over his full loss of sight, confirming his blindness as "a gift from

Heavens” and the resulting epic as his unfailing service to God (10). For Zabaluev, Milton’s heroism resides in the fact that his blindness did not prevent him from finishing *Paradise Lost*, where the “blind narrator glorified light” (2). Although blind Milton “does not see divine light, he sees heavenly light which is not seen by others” (Zabaluev 3). In the prologue of Book 3 of *Paradise Lost*, the so-called the “Prologue of Light,” Milton compares God to the fountain of Light and considers his own blindness as his special connection with God, as the “symbol of talent and spiritual vocation” (Zabaluev 2). Milton’s justification of God’s fate for him involves his poetic characterization of eyesight as distracting and even dangerous: “Having deprived him of sight, God withdrew him from the vanity of everyday life and allowed him to concentrate on internal, heavenly light” (Zabaluev 2). Through Uriel’s failure to recognize Satan in disguise, eyesight is shown as “vulnerable and insufficient” (4). Another danger of eyesight is voyeurism: Milton exposes Satan’s peeping at Eve in Book 9 and his voyeurism in Book 3 when Satan expresses his desire to Uriel to see the newly created world (Zabaluev 4). As Zabaluev puts it, “In contrast to the author’s [Milton’s] intention ‘to see and tell,’ Satan has the voyeuristic wish ‘to see and know’” (4). Satan’s look is “lascivious, envious, and destructive,” and his purpose “completely reveals the difference between the concealed lust and real reverence” (Zabaluev 4). Like a true voyeur, Satan “wishes to see without being seen” and often succeeds at being “imperceptible” in his “secret presence” (Zabaluev 4). However, although all-seeing God is invisible, he cannot be called “the transcendental voyeur” because of “the presence of the Son,” who “provides visual access to the Father so that heavenly beings could observe His divine substance, seeing streaming light” (Zabaluev 5).

In Virgil's *The Aeneid*, in Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, and in Bunyan's works, Hell is a place of intolerable noise and unceasing groans, whereas in Milton, Hell is a place of "horrid silence" and "perceives noise as a threat" (Zabaluev 7-8). Although "Milton's demons utter a wide variety of noises and even play music," their shouts are "simply silence" compared to the "roar of [Milton's] Chaos" (Zabaluev 8). Zabaluev argues that "Milton transfers those acoustic properties which were traditionally attributed to Hell to Chaos" (8). According to Zabaluev, "From the psychological point of view such an image of Hell is justified and convincing. For an ordinary viewer evil is the absence of light, and it is the absence of sounding for a blind person" (8). Zabaluev also points out that "Acoustically Eden is richer than Hell: diverse sounds of terrestrial life and night singing of guardian angels merge here" (8). Moreover, "Silence in heavens appears only once, i.e. after the death of the Son on the cross" (Zabaluev 8-9). Thus, in *Paradise Lost*, "silence is similar to damnation" and expresses the "theological concept of 'punishment by deprivation,' the removal of a creature from God" (Zabaluev 9). Zabaluev believes that the "horrid silence" of Milton's Hell is "an expressive analogue" of its "visible darkness" (9).

In conclusion of his article, Zabaluev compares the tragic fates of Milton and Beethoven—Milton's full loss of sight and Beethoven's full loss of hearing. However, despite Beethoven's deafness and Milton's blindness, both artists were able to turn their suffering into the creation of their immortal works with the "grace of internal hearing" and internal light, respectively (9). Zabaluev considers suffering as "an aesthetic emotion," insisting that Milton's *Paradise Lost* shows that "to melt the suffering into a perfect artistic creation is the purpose of the artist" (9). Hence Zabaluev laments the fact

that the twentieth century signals “a turning point in understanding of suffering,” for it is now perceived as something “self-sufficient,” “self-valuable,” and “antiaesthetic,” and “as the contents which no longer require form” (10).

### **The Post-Soviet Russian Editions of John Milton’s Poetic Oeuvre**

The post-Soviet editions of Milton’s works often lack a massive editorial apparatus associated with the Western scholarship standards, and thus there is usually no editorial preface, or explanatory note, or the original translator’s introduction that would provide details about the editorial practices for an edition, the editor’s particular choice of a Russian translation, or the translator’s decisions. If there happens to be an opening article, it is usually an introductory piece on Milton by a literary critic who makes no mention about the Russian translation or edition presently under consideration. Similarly, there is usually no biographical information openly given about the Russian editor or the Russian translator of Milton’s works, which is so customary in the Western editions, making it difficult to learn about the author’s academic credentials and other works in print. As a result, one has to rely on library research and Russia’s internet bookstores even to locate such basic information about Russian Miltonists.

There have not been any recent Russian translations or even editions of Milton’s prose works. Milton’s *A Brief History of Moscovia*, *Of Education*, and *Areopagitica* are the only *prose* works that ever appeared in a Russian translation and even they have not been published since the pre-Soviet times. Although Valentin Boss’s book, *The Rise of Russian Satanism*, published in 1991, mentions that a new translation of *Areopagitica* is

scheduled to come out in Leningrad (St. Petersburg), it is unclear whether this publication actually appeared since it is impossible to locate it anywhere, even twenty years later.

The collapse of the Soviet Union later that year made the completion of that project very difficult, considering the drastic change of the political climate and the emergence of new independent states and borders. Thus, what follows deals with the Russian translations and editions of Milton's poetic oeuvre.

There have appeared ten editions of Milton's poetry in the Russian translation in post-Soviet Russia, in the twenty-year span between 1991 and 2011. The first post-Soviet edition of Milton's poetic oeuvre in 1999, however, was a mere reprint of the now classic 1976 Soviet edition by the Moscow publisher "Khudozhestvennaia literatura" in the series "Library of World Literature" with very minor changes. Twenty-three years later, this edition was reprinted by "Kristall" in St. Petersburg and was limited to 7,000 copies (the original had 303,000 copies). It consists of 608 pages, has the engravings by Gustave Dore, and features Milton's major poetry with the notable exclusion of his *Paradise Regained*. Both the original edition (1976) and the new modified edition (1999) contain not only *Paradise Lost*, but Milton's other poetry as well, such as *Samson Agonistes*, *Comus*, *Lycidas*, and his shorter poems (Sonnets, Psalms, etc.). The original edition clearly indicates on its title page that it contains Milton's other works besides *Paradise Lost*, by listing *Samson Agonistes* and "Poems," as well as having a detailed table of contents with all of the other titles at the very end of the book. In contrast, the new edition is simply titled *John Milton. Paradise Lost*, so unless readers browse through the book or happen to look on the very last page that has a table of contents, they will not know that there are other works by Milton in it.



The title page of the new edition indicates that it is based on the original edition of 1976 by S. V. Shervinskii (editor) and publisher “Khudozhestvennaia Literatura.” The new general editor of the series (R. V. Grishchenkov) seems to have made only some minor changes to the original edition: *Samson Agonistes* is now placed right after *Paradise Lost* rather than at the end (as in the original edition), and the long introductory article by A. Anikst is now omitted. The font is larger and the page numbers no longer coincide with the original edition, but the translations are still the same, including all of the endnotes, which have been adjusted accordingly. The same eight illustrations by Gustave Dore have been preserved in the new edition as well, only now they bear captions of verse that correspond to the depicted scenes, and they all are gathered in the middle of the book (Book 8 of *Paradise Lost*) rather than scattered throughout the epic. However, previously they were placed in the correct books of the epic according to the plot development, so the captions were not as necessary in the original edition.

The translator of *Paradise Lost* in both editions (1976 and 1999) is A. A. Shteinberg, while the notes are prepared by I. Odakhovskaia. Although there have been new post-Soviet *editions* of his long epic, remarkably there has *not* been a new translation of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* since this 1976 translation by A. A. Shteinberg (1907-1984). Iu. B. Korneev is the translator for all of the other poetry: *Samson Agonistes*, *Comus*, *Lycidas*, *L’Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, Sonnets, Psalms, Epitaphs, Latin Elegies and Epigrams, Italian poetry, and other English poems (ISBN 5-8191-0033-6). Four US libraries own this edition, and thus it is obtainable through Interlibrary Loan service and a few internet Russian bookstores in the US for purchase.

The second post-Soviet edition proudly features a very rare separate printing of Milton's brief epic by the Moscow publisher "Vremia," commemorating the fact that by the year 2000, a separate Russian edition of *Paradise Regained* had not been published for more than a hundred years, most likely due to the seventy-four-year rule of the officially atheistic Soviet empire. Moreover, this is the most recent Russian translation of *Paradise Regained* since the tsarist times and thus is a monumental accomplishment by S. A. Aleksandrovskii, especially since it is in *verse*. However, the notes in this edition are reprinted from the respected nineteenth-century Russian *prose* translation of *Paradise Regained* by Moscow University's Professor A. Z. Zinov'ev (Moskva: Universitetskaia tipografiia, 1861). This edition also includes all of Milton's nineteen English sonnets in the 2001 debut Russian translation by A. P. Prokop'ev, as well as an afterward by E. V. Vitkovskii, the future translator of Milton's *Il Penseroso* in Gorbunov's 2006 edition. Previously, all of Milton's sonnets, like his other shorter poems, had appeared only in Iu. B. Korneev's Soviet translation in the seminal 1976 edition. It consists of 192 pages, has engravings by G. Dore and R. Westall, and is limited to 3,000 copies in the series of "Triumfy" ["Triumphs"] (ISBN 5-94117-015-7). Only one US library owns this edition, but it is also obtainable through a few internet Russian bookstores in the US.

The third post-Soviet edition of Milton's poetry is very surprising because it reprints the nineteenth-century Russian prose translations of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* by A. Shul'govskaia (1895) in the year of 2004—over a century later, testifying to its enduring quality. It contains 256 pages and is prefaced by the translator's biographical article on Milton that served as the introduction to her translation in the original. There is no editor's introduction and thus I. L. Shurygina's choice to reprint this

particular translation must be explained by this edition's claim that Milton's "poems are presented in a very song-like, lyrical prose translation." This edition is published by Moscow's "Terra-Knizhnyi klub" in the series of "Sokrovishcha mirovoy literatury" ["Treasures of World Literature"] and features a small illustration by William Blake on its cover, which marks the first occurrence of Blake's art in Russian editions of Milton's works (ISBN: 5-275-00936-4). In fact, a later Russian edition by "Eksmo" will continue this surprising trend by also resurrecting A. Shul'govskaia's nineteenth-century prose translations with some modern editing in its glorious 2010 gift edition with additional illustrations. US libraries do not own this edition, and thus there is no bibliographic record of it in the WorldCat or the MLA International Bibliography databases, but it is available for purchase from a few internet Russian bookstores in the US.

The fourth post-Soviet edition of Milton's poetic oeuvre in the Russian translation is A. N. Gorbunov and T. Iu. Stamova's "academic" 2006 edition, endorsed by Russia's Academy of Sciences and published by "Nauka" ["Science"] in the series of "Literaturnye pamiatniki" ["Literary Monuments"]. Its chief editor, Moscow State University's Professor Gorbunov, claims to have created his notes from consulting various British and American editions, as well as two earlier Russian editions (the 1999 edition of *Paradise Lost* by "Kristall" and the 2001 edition of *Paradise Regained* by "Vremia"). The "Appendices" to this scholarly edition contain four articles by Professor Gorbunov: the first introductory piece surveys Milton's life and works, while the other three articles represent in-depth comparative studies of Milton and the famous Russian authors, such as Pushkin, Dostoevskii, and Bulgakov.

Most importantly, this is the first modern edition of Milton's poetry in Russian translation that includes all three of his larger poems—as already noted, *Paradise Regained* was often omitted in the Soviet editions of Milton's works. Moreover, Gorbunov's edition features two new Russian translators of Milton's works, who appear in print for the first time in this edition: T. Iu. Stamova (*Samson Agonistes*, "Nativity Ode," "On Shakespeare," Psalms (1-8; 79-87), *Arcadia's Inhabitants*) and A. Zuevskii ("Passions" and "On Circumcision"). This is the first post-Soviet translation of Milton's *Samson Agonistes* since Iu. B. Korneev's popular Soviet rendition, making it a significant milestone. Likewise, T. Iu. Stamova's and A. Zuevskii's 2006 debut translations of Milton's shorter poems in this edition represent the first post-Soviet poetic effort since Iu. B. Korneev's Soviet rendering of these poems in the authoritative 1976 edition. S. A. Aleksandrovskii's 2000 translation of *Paradise Regained* and A. P. Prokop'ev 2001 translation of Milton's English sonnets (seventeen sonnets, "To a Nightingale," and "On Turning 23"), previously published only separately, prominently feature in Gorbunov's edition as well. The rest of the translators are much more familiar to readers as they have appeared in the previous editions of Milton's poetry, such as A. A. Shteinberg (*Paradise Lost*), Iu. B. Korneev (*Comus*, *Lycidas*, and lyrics), V. Levik (*L'Allegro*), E. Vitkovskii (*Il Penseroso*). Unfortunately, there are only 2,000 copies of this 860-page edition, making it quite rare, hard-to-obtain, and very obscure (ISBN 5-02-033240-2). As mentioned above, by comparison, there were 303,000 copies of the popular Soviet edition of Milton's works published by "Khudozhestvennaia literatura" in 1976, which was then reprinted with minor changes by "Kristall" in 1999 in the quantity of 7,000.

Gorbunov's choice of illustrations by Gustave Dore for Milton's *Paradise Lost* is rather traditional and consistent with all of the earlier Russian editions of the epic. In fact, in the same year (2006), St. Petersburg's publisher "Al'faret" reproduced Gustave Dore's fifty-three illustrations to Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The important exception to this tradition would become a later edition—the 2007 edition by "Eskmo" that uses William Blake's illustrations for the first time in the history of Russian editions of Milton's works. However, Gorbunov's choice of the cover illustrations is quite fresh for the Russian editions: Titian's *Adam and Eve in Paradise* (1576) on the front cover and Rembrandt's *The Blinding of Samson (The Triumph of Delilah)* (1628) on the back cover, as well as Blake's illustration to his poem *Milton* (1804) on the inside flap of the front cover. Gorbunov's edition also showcases some rare photos of Miltoniana in the Russian editions of Milton's works and biography, such as his only surviving house, the Cottage in Chalfont Saint Giles (Gorbunov 603), the site location plan of Christ's College in Cambridge (583), Milton's portrait at twenty-one years of age (584), his portrait on the frontispiece of the first edition of his poems in 1645 (598), and the unfinished miniature of Oliver Cromwell by Samuel Cooper (599). The book's back cover also lists its title in English and the title page is mirrored in English on the verso, which is quite rare in Russian editions of Milton's works. No US library owns this edition and no internet Russian bookstores in the US sell it, but there is a bibliographic record of it in the WorldCat database supplied by the National Library of France that owns this edition. Even Russia's bookstores rarely have this edition in their inventory.

The fifth post-Soviet edition concerns an interesting Russian translation-adaptation of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* for middle-school students by R. P. Aldonina.

This edition is lavishly illustrated by Andrey Mazin and is published by Moscow's "Belyi gorod" in the series of "Mify narodov mira" ["Myths of the Peoples of the World"]. It appeared in 2006 in 4,000 copies, which indicates quite a demand for such an adaption for school children (ISBN 5-7793-1041-6). No US library owns this edition, and hence there is no bibliographic record of it in the WorldCat or MLA International Bibliography databases; however, a few internet Russian bookstores in the US sell it.

The sixth post-Soviet edition of Milton's poetry was published in 2007, only a year after A. N. Gorbunov's academic edition, and is another milestone in Russian editions of Milton because it chooses to print William Blake's illustrations to *Paradise Lost* over those of Gustave Dore for the first time. Moreover, this edition reverts back to the old Russian translations of Milton's major poems—the nineteenth-century *prose* translation of *Paradise Regained* by Evgeniia Tur (1891) and N. A. Brianskii's 1911 verse translation of *Samson Agonistes*. It is surprising that the editor chose Evgeniia Tur's pre-Soviet prose translation of *Paradise Regained* over S. A. Aleksandrovskii's post-Soviet verse rendition and N. A. Brianskii's pre-Soviet translation of *Samson Agonistes* over Iu. B. Korneev's Soviet version or Iu. Stamova's post-Soviet rendering. These two editions were in the works at the same time, and the editors were evidently unaware of one another, but equally eager to appear in print by Milton's quatercentenary in 2008. This is a second modern Russian edition (after Gorbunov's) that includes all three major poems by Milton, even though *Samson Agonistes* is not mentioned on its title page, and only *Paradise Lost* is announced on the cover. In this edition, the translation of *Paradise Lost* is as always by A. A. Shteinberg, who passed away in 1984, apparently leaving no rivals. This edition contains 608 pages and is published by "Eksmo" in the

series of “Biblioteka vseмирnoy literatury” [“Library of World Literature”]. There is also a long introductory article about Milton by Liubov’ B. Summ, who is an academic and a Russian translator of works by St. Francis of Assisi and G. K. Chesterton, among others. The twelve illustrations to *Paradise Lost* by William Blake in this edition are scattered throughout the book, somewhat confusingly appearing even on the pages of *Paradise Regained*, *Samson Agonistes*, and “Notes” as well. The notes to *Paradise Lost* are prepared by I. Odakhovskaia as in the original edition of 1976, while the notes to *Paradise Regained* are reprinted from Professor A. Z. Zinov’ev’s (Moscow University) own published prose translation of this work in 1861 (Moskva: Universitetskaia tipografiia). This edition is limited to 5,000 copies (ISBN 978-5-699-22844-7). Three US libraries own this edition, but it is still available for purchase through some internet Russian bookstores.

The seventh post-Soviet edition of Milton’s poetic oeuvre boasts an expensive, luxurious, leather-bound, hubbed-spined gift edition of *Paradise Lost* in the famous 1976 verse translation by A. A. Shteinberg (1907-1984) with footnote commentary by I. Odakhovskaia and decorated with all fifty illustrations by Gustave Dore (1832-1883), which bear captions in Russian verse from Shteinberg’s poetic translation. The beginning of each book of *Paradise Lost* is decorated with an elaborate grapevine-motif ornamentation originally developed by William Morris. Although the book’s cover does not indicate it, the “Appendix” also features Milton’s *Paradise Regained* in the 1891 *prose* translation by the Russian novelist and critic Evgeniia Tur (1815-1892), which is considered a practically ideal line-by-line Russian rendition by the editor Aleksey Dmitrenko. This edition favors Evgeniia Tur’s nineteenth-century prose translation of

*Paradise Regained* over A. Z. Zinov'ev's also accurate, but more archaic prose style translation of 1861; however, the editor still chooses to use A. Z. Zinov'ev's original notes with some modifications. The Appendix also contains the famous Soviet Miltonist Alexander Chameev's article on Milton's life and works and Vadim Zartayskii's brief piece on Gustave Dore's career as a book illustrator. This limited edition of 1,300 copies contains 640 pages and was published by Saint-Petersburg's "Vita Nova" in 2008 in the series of "Famili'naia biblioteka. Paradnyi zal" ["Familial Library. Main Hall"] to commemorate John Milton's 400<sup>th</sup> birthday (ISBN 978-5-93898-179-9). Ninety out of 1,300 copies from this gift edition are numbered and bound in black "E-Cabra" leather with gilded page ends, and the first ten copies are bound in special leather of handmade quality. These ninety numbered copies can cost over \$500 even in Russia, and the first ten copies in special binding are priced over \$1,000, while the unnumbered copies sell for over \$100—all printed on European equipment. Understandably, no US library owns this expensive gift edition, and it is hard to find it in the Russian bookstores in the US, but it is obtainable through Russia's internet bookstores with international shipping services.

The eighth post-Soviet edition of Milton's poetry is the 2009 reprint of the 2007 edition by the same publisher, Moscow's "Eksmo," in 4,000 additional copies, making this edition reach 9,000 copies in total, which demonstrates not only the popularity of the original edition, but also of Milton's three major poems and William Blake's illustrations to *Paradise Lost* with the post-Soviet readers. This edition contains the same 608 pages and even the same misleading cover that lists only *Paradise Lost* and the same inaccurate title page without the mention of *Samson Agonistes*—the only minor changes are in the actual placement of the same twelve illustrations to *Paradise Lost* by Gustave Dore



within the book, which has not improved their original confusing scattering throughout the edition (ISBN 978-5-699-31473-7). Surprisingly, there is no bibliographic record of this edition in the WorldCat or the MLA International Bibliography databases yet, even though it is obtainable through the Interlibrary Loan service, and is readily available for purchase in the Russian bookstores in the US.

The ninth post-Soviet edition of Milton's poetic oeuvre is the 2010 luxurious cowhide leather-bound gift edition of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* again by the Moscow publisher "Eksmo" in the series of "Biblioteka velikih pisateley. Brokgauz-Efron" ["Library of Great Writers. Brockhaus-Efron"]. This series hopes to resurrect the format and quality of the legendary Brockhaus-Efron editions of Imperial Russia's printing past by employing high-quality printing materials for showcasing great literary works to achieve a truly aesthetic experience for its readers. Both of Milton's epics are presented in A. Shul'govskaia's nineteenth-century prose translations, which were then edited from Russian archaisms by the modern Russian translator Irina Evsa, who also put the epics' most memorable passages in a Russian verse translation that accompanies A. Shul'govskaia's prose rendering on the same page to a great poetic effect. This edition proudly features fancy illustrations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* by three famous artists: Gustave Dore, William Blake, and Henry Fuseli. G. Dore's illustrations are placed strategically within the corresponding books of Milton's epics and are introduced with Russian verse captions, while W. Blake's and H. Fuseli's colorful art is situated at random. The endnotes are prepared by Iu. Slavianov. The introductory article to this edition is a mere reprint of the Russian translation of Thomas Macaulay's 1825 biographical piece on Milton in the *Edinburgh Review*. This edition consists of 352

pages and is limited to 3,000 copies (ISBN 978-5-699-38010-7). Unfortunately, there is no editorial preface to this edition, so unless readers look at the endnotes, they will have no idea whose translations of Milton's epics they are offered by the editor. The book cover also features Milton's signature, which is very rare for Russian editions. There is no bibliographic record of this edition in the WorldCat or the MLA International Bibliography databases yet, and considering its high cost and status as a gift edition, it will probably not become available through the Interlibrary Loan service. However, it is currently available for purchase for about \$60 in some Russian bookstores in the US—a very expensive book by Russia's standards, where regular books cost in the range of \$7-20.

The tenth and most recent post-Soviet edition of Milton's poetry is the 2011 leather-bound gift edition of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* accented with gold on the cover and with gilded page ends by the Moscow publisher "Eksmo" in the series of "Kniga v podarok" ["Book for a Gift"]. This edition surprisingly resurrects Ol'ga N. Chiumina's nineteenth-century verse translations of Milton's epics for the first time since tsarist Russia, because they are still considered the best poetic rendering in pre-revolutionary Russia and thus still untainted by the Soviet ideology. Unfortunately, in the absence of an editorial preface, one can only surmise the editor L. Kondrashova's true reasons for her editorial choices and endnotes' content; however, her decision to forego A. A. Shteinberg's highly-revered Soviet verse translation of *Paradise Lost* in favor of O. N. Chiumina's also verse, but pre-Soviet 1899 rendition is truly groundbreaking. On the other hand, the editor might not have been that ambitious and simply wanted to resurrect O. N. Chiumina's nineteenth-century edition in a modern reprint, which would also

explain her passing over of S. A. Aleksandrovskii's 2000 post-Soviet verse translation of *Paradise Regained*, which cannot be accused of containing Soviet ideological mentality. This edition features black-and-white illustrations by the French Gustave Dore and the Russian Konstantin V. Ol'shanskii—a rare combination of the two international artists in a Russian edition. It consists of 544 pages and is limited to 2,000 copies. (ISBN 978-5-699-44941-5). Not surprisingly, there is no bibliographic record of this edition in the WorldCat or the MLA International Bibliography database yet, and it is uncertain if US libraries will own this expensive gift edition. However, it is currently available for purchase for \$50 in some Russian bookstores in the US.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

John Milton's complex nature, his interesting life, and controversial works have garnered attention from literary critics in Russia and the former Soviet Union. Each political era has interpreted Milton in its own way, finding some aspect of his life and writings worthy of sympathy or disapproval. Every ideology has claimed Milton as its champion: Marxists view him as a left-wing radical, an anti-imperialist, captured in his character Satan (e.g. A. Anikst, R. Samarin, A. Chameev, and I. Kon); conservatives perceive him as a religious individual, serving his God by propagating Christian faith through his didactic works (e.g. I. Ivanov, I. Garin, and T. Pavlova). The Marxist gloss on *Paradise Lost* draws a direct analogy between the English and Bolshevik revolutions, and discards the epic's biblical foundation as an ingenious mask; in contrast, pre- and post-Soviet critics consider the epic as a monument to Christianity. Milton's political image becomes identified not only with Satan of *Paradise Lost*, but also with Aeschylus' Prometheus, another rebel against authority. These parallels allow critics to focus on the epic's revolutionary nature and neglect its devotional theme and its association with the Bible (e.g. E. Solov'ev and A. Lunacharskii).

Ironically, Milton's political activities and his strong anti-monarchist sentiments, which had earned him the reputation of a dangerously subversive figure in Tsarist Russia,

elevated his status during the Soviet regime. In contrast, modern Russian critics (e.g. I. Garin, T. Pavlova) view Milton's religious faith nostalgically and passionately defend his Puritan ideals against the Romantic interpretation promoted by Soviet critics that made Milton out to be a revolutionary. They reject the celebrated status of Satan of *Paradise Lost* as the epic's protagonist and Milton's idol and believe that Milton has not left any room for doubting Satan's absolute evilness, a hypothesis strengthened by his characterization in *Paradise Regained*. In fact, Soviet critics conveniently avoided analyzing this smaller epic, since it did not lend itself to the ennoblement of Satan's motives. Thus, already in 1994, just three years after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russian critics started vigorously attacking the Soviet portrayal of Milton, and instead created their own portrait of the English poet, liberated from the oppressive chains of militant Marxist exegesis.

Consequently, history seems to repeat itself: just as Mother Russia sheds its Soviet legacy and reverts back to its cultural roots, Milton's fate in Russia comes full circle, his image stripped of Marxist dogma. The collapse of the officially atheistic Soviet empire has signaled the revival of religion and nationalism in Russia that immediately restores the Christian context for Milton's works, as demonstrated by the recent studies of Milton. This present trend will continue, due to the collapse of a state-sponsored ideology in contemporary Russia, allowing for the expression of contrarian and unorthodox views of Milton—perspectives universally suppressed in the tsarist Russian and Soviet eras. In fact, Milton's lesser known works on devotional themes will soon find their share of public attention, since the Bible has made its way back into Russian culture.

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